EX LIBRIS
252.4
H 719
SOCIETATIS
VERBI DIVINI
Techny, Ill.

The Catholic
Theological Union
LIBRARY
Chicago, Ill.

NIHIL OBSTAT :

FRANCISCUS PAYNE, S.J.,

CENSOR DEPUTATUS.

IMPRIMATUR :

✠ ROBERTUS BRINDLE,

EPISCOPUS NOTTINGHAMIENSIS.

Die 22 *Martii*, 1902.

Practical Preaching for Priests and People

Second Series

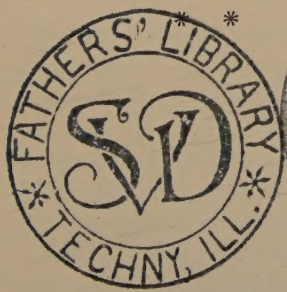
TWENTY-FIVE PLAIN CATHOLIC SERMONS ON USEFUL SUBJECTS

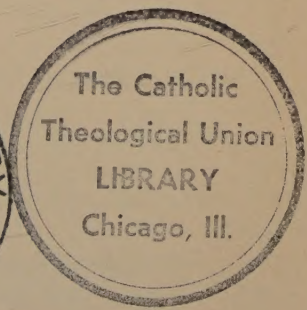
WITH A SYNOPSIS OF EACH SERMON

WITHDRAWN

BY

FR. CLEMENT HOLLAND





LONDON
THOMAS BAKER
SOHO SQUARE

NEW YORK
BENZIGER BROS.
BARCLAY STREET

MCMII.

76674

CONTENTS.

PAGE

Sufferings of The Poor at Christmas. (For IV. Sunday of Advent). 1
Christ and the Youth of To-day. (Sunday after Epiphany). . 15
The Pilgrim's Duty. (Sunday after Epiphany). 29
The Seed of the Word. (For Sexagesima Sunday). . . . 49
The Acceptable Time. (I. Sunday of Lent). 63
Children of the Evil One. (Passion Sunday). 85
The Re-union of Christendom. (II. Sunday after Easter). . 103
The Foster Father of Christ. (Patronage of St. Joseph). . 135
How I Should Receive My God. (Corpus Christi). . . . 147
The True Bread of Eternal Life. (For Processions). . . 167
Indifferentism to Religion. (VII. Sunday after Pentecost). . 183
Indifferentism in Religion. (VII. Sunday after Pentecost). . 199
The Grand Essential of Religion. (XVI. Sunday after Pentecost). 223
The Men who refused their King's Invitation. (XIX. Sunday after Pentecost). 250
The Man degraded beneath the Brute. (XX. Sunday after Pentecost). 257
God and His Creatures: Man and His Fellows. (XXI. Sunday after Pentecost). 273
The Masterpiece of God's Creation. (Appropriate for May). 287
The Privileges of Mary. (Appropriate for May). 301
The Visitation of the Sick. (Hospital Sunday). 313
Pope and King. 329
Ambassadors of Christ. 347
Do Catholics read the Bible? 375
The End of All. 363
The Modern Woman. 393
The Modern Pharisee. 412

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE POOR AT CHRISTMAS.

A

SYNOPSIS.

The Sufferings of the Poor at Christmas.

"*Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me.*"—St. Matt. xxv. 40.

Introduction . . The Enrolment

Christ and the Poor

1. Christ born in abject poverty.
2. Heaven's care of the poor.
3. Little children Christ's brethren.
4. The sick poor Christ's brethren.
5. Christ defends the poor, and points out our duties to them.

Conclusion . . A lively faith will make us see Christ in the poor.

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE POOR AT CHRISTMAS.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

"Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me."—St. Matt. xxv. 40.

INTRODUCTION.

The Enrolment.—The days of December, brethren, are quickly waning, and the time is drawing near, when the great feast of Christmas will be announced to the Christian world. More than nineteen hundred years ago, when, "eternal Rome," was the proud legend of the world, there went forth a decree from Cæsar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. In other words, the Roman Empire, built up from a degenerate republic by Julius Cæsar, was now ruled over by his nephew, and this proud man now at variance with many, wished the census to be taken, so that he might know his greatness and his power.

CHRIST AND THE POOR.

1. Christ born in abject Poverty.—The Romans were a methodical people, and hence each person had to be enrolled in his own city. Wherefore a poor carpenter named Joseph went up from

Nazareth of Galilee to the city of Bethlehem, for he was of the royal house of David, there to enter his name and that of Mary his holy Spouse. They were poor indeed though descended from a royal line, and travelling was not then as it is now, a thing of comparative ease and little trouble. The Virgin Spouse was about to become a Mother, for she was that great woman spoken of in Eden, when God said to the serpent. "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel" (Gen. iii. 15). She who was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, now bore within her sacred womb the Son of the Eternal Father. But to-night the city was crowded, and she and Joseph were very poor. Those who belonged to the city, those who were born in it many years ago, now returned, and there was scant room for all, and the crush was great. Those who had wealth and name, those who had powerful friends were well looked after, for then as now the rich were pampered and flattered, whilst the poor went to the wall. There was one amongst the latter, for whom no room in the whole range of the city, could be found. Weary and footsore after their journey, Joseph and Mary sought refuge at the inns but without avail. Can we not fancy we hear some of the answers they received?. Some perhaps were harsh few were civil, and most likely some of

the innkeepers shut the doors in their faces, just as the rich of to-day slam their doors in the faces of the destitute, or even call in the aid of the law to remove poor widow or orphan, who dares to commit, the so-called crime, of asking for a crust of bread to sustain life.

At last after a fruitless search for accommodation, cold, weary and tired, the holy travellers find a shed or cave on the side of the mountain, where often in the chilly night the cattle hoarded together for warmth, and here Joseph and Mary took refuge. Here then the Virgin Mother was delivered, here Our Lord was born at the hour of midnight. The manger was converted into a cradle, His bed but a little straw, whilst His clothing was little better than tattered rags. And so when the Roman Empire had reached the climax of its greatness, when its splendours were such that men called it eternal, Christ the King, the Prince of Peace, was born in an out of the way corner of Judea. His palace was a stable, its carpets straw, His attendants poor though saintly, His cradle a manger. Surely here we behold the most abject poverty. There were no great personages here to vie with each other in making Him dainty clothes, none whose ingenuity was exercised in making Him a comfortable and costly resting place. Ah no, His Mother was poor and the rich would gain nothing in this world's estimation, by noticing her or her

Babe. So the wealthy and great of this world swept by, leaving them both to live or die as nature cared. If these people could have made a show of their charity, if the Mother had been rich, no doubt they would have visited her, offered their congratulations and services, and have placed much of their time at her disposal. But no, it was the old story, down with the poor, away with them, get rid of them. How very different were the sentiments of Our Lord, even in His birth He shows this. He shows His love of poverty, His love of the truly poor, by being poor Himself even the first moment that He appeared amongst us. He might have been born, had He wished it, amidst comfort and luxuries of every kind, but He preferred to be numbered amongst, and to be one of the poorest of the poor.

2. Heaven's care of the poor.—But if the great ones of the world neglected the Divine Infant, it was not so with the Eternal Father. To the simple god-fearing Shepherds on the hill-side He announced the coming of the Saviour, the Mighty One, with the government of the world upon His shoulders. Earth had passed Him, but Heaven adores Him, and over the lowly stable myriads of angels sang their midnight song: "Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus." Thus was ushered into the world, the Lord of the world, in poverty, in humility, in lowliness. And as He was born so

He continued to be till the last hour of His life. The humble son of a carpenter's holy Spouse, He loved the poor, and upon them He showered down His greatest blessings, and in the end He was buried in another's grave for He had none of His own. It was poor fishermen that he chose to preach the Gospel, and to them He most fully revealed Himself. What notions must the Shepherds have conceived of the new born Infant, what emotions must have filled their hearts, when they saw Him laid in the very situation the angels had described. With what joy and gratitude did they acknowledge the extraordinary favour shown them, as being the first of mankind to be informed of the birth of the Redeemer. Even here Christ showed His predelection for the poor by causing His coming to be announced first to them. And in those days just as at present the practice of charity was most discernable amongst the poorer class of people. The helpless widow is seen to slip into the hands of the poor, a part of her little means, which she can badly spare from that which she has to provide for herself and her poor little orphans. The poor labourer, cheerfully receives and generously divides with the wandering beggar, the hard-earned morsel as well as the fire-side of his cottage. What a lesson, and yet what a rebuke to the great and wealthy ones of this world. It was to such poor that Christ first deigned to announce Himself.

3. Little children Christ's brethren.—But now who are in an especial sense the brethren of Christ? The poor truly, but above all poor little children. How sad indeed is it, to see those innocent little ones, who have never known a crime, shivering and pining at this terrible season of the year. Weak, feeble, and unable in any way to help themselves, surely their very powerlessness must move the hearts of those who care to help them. What would not Our Lord do for them were He now living on earth, would He not in every way help and comfort them? But if He is not now present amongst us as He was at Bethlehem, has He not left this great and holy work of helping and comforting the poor to us. The poor He has given into our charge, and their wants, their sufferings, their miseries, we are bound to attend to and relieve. If we do not fulfil this duty, we do not fulfil the law which commands us to, "love our neighbours as ourselves." And unless we obey this law we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. How can we be said to love our neighbours as ourselves, if we do not care about their sufferings, or if knowing their wants we refuse to relieve them? How careful we are about ourselves, how attentive we are to all our wants. Before cold comes we clothe ourselves well, if we are thirsty we quickly drink, and if hungry at once we eat; yet we care not for, and often neglect the poor

fatherless child, who is scantly clad, and without food or fire. His pains, his sufferings, his cries we heed not. Ah, perhaps we would have neglected to help or succour the Divine Child of Bethlehem had we been present, yet it was no doubt to move our hard and stony hearts, that Our Lord appeared as an Infant surrounded by such abject humility and poverty, it was to move our hearts and make us kind and charitable to His little brethren, to little children, that He came amongst us in such a way. Surely then this very fact should teach us to be especially tender, and charitable to poor little children, who at this season of the year may be taken to represent the Divine Child Himself.

4. The sick poor Christ's brethren.—But again there are other brethren of Christ. There are the sick and the lame, the poor and the weak. Christmas time, is a time of joy. On that day around the hearth there should be peace and happiness. For one day in the year at least, business and worldly pursuits are put aside, and pure innocent enjoyment should hold the sway. Parties are arranged, and loved ones long absent return to the fireside, and all is cheerful, all is happiness. But when the joyful bells announce the glad tidings that Christmas has come; when glad hearts sing forth their joyful: "Gloria in Excelsis Deo;" ah, how many have we in our midst whose position will be like that of Joseph and Mary on the first

Christmas Eve? Weary and hungry they pass from door to door seeking for help, being without a spot whereon to lay their heads. Whilst the poor lame man seeks for a copper to gain shelter for the night, from the wintry weather and biting frost; the poor widow and her children are huddled around the embers of a dying fire, with a cheerless home, nothing to eat, and a craving of hunger that makes the little ones cry out for bread. The sick too are in want, in great want as they lie stretched on their bed of suffering in the utmost pain and agony, with little or no relief to ease their limbs but a hard cold bed, nor anything to cool their burning fever, but a few drops of tasteless water. Does not their sad position appeal to our hearts, and can we refuse to help them at such a season as this when their sufferings are so greatly augmented? What will Christmas be for them? Unless we come forward and succour them, it will be a sad time, a time when the knowledge that others are enjoying themselves, will make their burdens heavier still. The sick and the lame were especially dear to Christ. He wrought most of His stupenduous miracles to relieve them of their sufferings. The Gospels clearly prove this, and we know that he gave His Apostles a distinct command that wherever they went they were to heal the suffering and the ailing. Can we then be true followers of Christ, can we be true Christians if we turn away and are deaf to the

call and entreaties of the sick? The very feast of Christmas ought to make us most charitable to all, for is it not a distinct proof of God's great charity, of His wondrous love for us, when He now comes down from Heaven to earth to begin the great work of our Redemption, to die for us and save us, from everlasting pain and tortures. Thus it is, that the very feast of Christmas should greatly increase our charity.

5. Christ defends the poor, points out our duties to them.—Christ was ever the defender of the poor, the greatest friend they ever had. In a most practical manner He proved this, by becoming poor Himself. He left Heaven for a cheerless stable, His golden throne for a manger, and although the richest He became the poorest, in order that those like Him, might find a father and a friend. But still He was no frantic socialist, no leveller of men. He preached and told His poor to give honour where honour was due, and to render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's. The fundamental teaching of Christ was, that the human race was one large family, one large brotherhood, each one having the same origin, the same eternal destiny, the same Father and God. There was equality of origin, equality of destiny, but not of talents, of energy and success. There were to be rich and poor, little and great, and the duties of each state towards the others were clearly set down. Look at the rich

man and Lazarus. The one feasted every day clothed in rich apparel, whilst the other full of sores and poorly clad, lay at the proud man's gate and in vain called for assistance. But when both died, Lazarus went to Abraham's bosom, but the rich man was buried in hell. Here we behold the consequences of neglecting the poor. Whoever considers the various conditions of men in this world, must see that some are in the greatest poverty and want, whilst others abound not only with the necessaries of life, but even with its comforts and superfluities. Is it then to be imagined that the Almighty Father of all, could have ordained so great a distinction and inequality amongst men, by favouring a few and overlooking the wants of the rest? No, this would be utterly inconsistent with the wisdom of God Who provides plentifully for the birds of the air and the beasts of the field. By this disposition the wisdom of God shines forth in the most conspicuous manner; for although He could have supplied the wants of the poor Himself without the intervention of others, yet He chose to lay this obligation on the rich, in order to unite the different orders of men in the closer ties, and make the very difference of their conditions, instrumental to their eternal happiness; sanctifying the poor by patience and suffering, and the rich by their benevolence and charity to the indigent. To make our duties absolutely clear in this matter Christ identifies

Himself with the poor, and mentions many of the circumstances which should cause us to succour the poor. He takes the charity bestowed upon them as an obligation conferred upon Himself. "I was hungry and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me to drink; I was naked and you clothed Me; sick and in prison and you visited Me." Behold here now Our Lord mentions several afflictions which are continually found with the poor, sickness, hunger, thirst, want of clothing, and the like. And when men will ask where they saw Him thus, His answer is very clear. "Amen I say to you as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren you did it to Me." (St. Matt. xxv). Thus does Christ show us that we must be charitable to the poor. He calls them His brethren and at the moment of Judgment, this matter of charity will have to be accounted for, and we shall be rewarded or punished, according to the manner in which we have acted.

Conclusion.—No one brethren who contemplates the privations of the Divine Infant in the stable at Bethlehem, can remain without feelings of compassion and sympathy, and a desire to render Him all possible relief and comfort. This He has assured us we can do by exercising charity to His brethren, His poor members. Nothing but a lively faith is wanting, to make us behold Christ in every object of distress that meets our eye. We may not be rich, we may not be able to give a great deal, but

a little from each of us, a little luxury denied to ourselves, will gladden the heart of many a poor widowed mother and make her children delighted. Forget not then either the poor or the afflicted whom God has left to your mercy. A little money, a little food, a few articles of clothing will make others happy, and not break you. Catholics you know that this wintry time is most trying to the poor and the sick, that it increases their sufferings. Help them then all you can, do so for the love of God, and when you stand before His Judgment seat He will call upon you to enter Heaven saying, "I was hungry and you gave Me to eat; thirsty and you gave Me to drink; naked and you clothed Me; sick and in prison and you visited Me;" for He will add; "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren you did it to Me."

CHRIST AND THE YOUTH OF TO-DAY.

SYNOPSIS.

Christ and the Youth of To-day.

"And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject them."—St. Luke II. 51.

Introduction . .	A striking lesson from the life of Christ.
Starting out from the harbour	1. The home and life of the Holy Family. 2. The value of a good training, and a good home.
Drifting on and Shipwreck	3. Drifting from religion and home. 4. The rock of intemperance. 5. The rock of gambling. 6. The rock of immorality.
Conclusion . . .	Firm correction of young children. Imitation of Christ as a youth

CHRIST AND THE YOUTH OF TO-DAY.

(SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.)

"And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to to them."—St. Luke II. 51.

INTRODUCTION.

A striking lesson from the life of Christ.—The Catholic, my brethren, being a Christian, should be another Christ; hence the life of the God-man is the model life, after which we should fashion ours. For, to be another Christ means to walk in Our Lord's holy footsteps, and to bring practically into our daily lives, the virtues which we see exhibited in His. This indeed is nothing else, than the studying and copying of His holy life, and the application of its lessons to our own. No state however highly exalted, no sex, age, or condition of man is there, which does not find in Christ's life most pointed lessons, and these of the highest, holiest and most noble kind; yet, perhaps, none is more striking, than that contained in the words of this morning's Gospel; "and was subject to them." Strange indeed it seems, that so much of Christ's life was spent, in the seclusion of His humble home. When but a Babe, we see the Magi searching for and and finding Him, when he is twelve years old we

catch a glimpse of Him in the Temple; and then He disappears till the beginning of His public Mission. But the Gospel shows Him to us, living as a loving obedient child subject to Joseph and Mary; yes, and it also shows Him going down to Nazareth, subject to them, not for a few short years but until He arrived at the mature age of manhood. We hear no more of Him, until He begins to preach about the age of thirty, all believing Him to be the carpenter's Son. More than eighteen years of Christ's life are written down in these few words; "And He was subject to them." What a lesson does Christ teach here to the youths of to-day, who rebel, and revolt, against parental authority, and who on account of this often afterwards lose their souls.

STARTING OUT FROM THE HARBOUR.

1. The home and life of the Holy Family.—Who can picture the home of the Holy Family, who can describe the life that its members led there. There was nothing to dim or mar its beauty and holiness. Joseph, the watchful guardian, goes about his work calm and unruffled, ruling through sweetness and love. Mary watches over her Son, and tends to her spouse, and her affection for them is the mainspring of her life. But Jesus, God though He is, is the meek and humble Child obeying the commands of both, with the greatest, regularity, punctuality and love; delighted to help His holy

Mother and St. Joseph when He is old enough. In that home, He has laid the foundations of His after life, and under the training of Joseph and Mary, He has prepared for the battles which He will have to face in the world, and He leaves it only at the last moment. Thirty three years in his life, yet only three are spent on His public mission, the rest are spent at home, under subjection and obedience. Could a more pointed lesson be given to the youth of our times? Who has not noticed that the youths of our day think themselves men, and want, not to obey, but to rule everybody and everything, a few years after they as children have left their cradles, when not half-way through their teens? "What do you think they are going to obey parents, or be advised by the priest?,, No, indeed, they look insulted if you mention it. "Do you imagine that they will listen and be attentive to their religious duties?" No, they think themselves as wise and as enlightened as any priest; and as to church-going and the rest, they leave all that for women and children who have time for it, they themselves have other matters to attend to.

2. The value of a good training, and a good home.—The home of the youth is the harbour from which he embarks on the ocean of life, and few indeed estimate at their proper worth, a good home, and the priceless boon of training under holy parents. However a youth may have obeyed during the early years

of childhood, it is only after his mind has opened and developed, that he can drink in those counsels and principles, that will guide him in the future. Then he can have the advice and the example of his parents, who have passed over the ocean of life, and know its perils. They can warn him, they can point out the rocks which may wreck him, and to them he should listen with due reverence and humility. The goal to be reached is not success in this world, whether he aim at wealth or position; he must aim to reach the harbour of Heaven, or the tempest of sin, temptation and misery, will dash him like great rolling waves, on the treacherous shores of hell. With what awe, with what dread then, should the youth cross the threshold of his home, to embark on the journey of life. With his parents advice to pilot him, and the principles of religion to strengthen and encourage him, the way is less dangerous, his landing more safe and secure.

But look at the presumptuous youth, who will not listen to either parents or priest. As he sets out the great ocean seems calm and unruffled, though beneath its surface are many jagged rocks, and prospects being bright, the youth expects a pleasant journey. For a time the sun shines brightly overhead, but soon the night comes on, and a fierce storm of temptations bursts upon him. The tempests blow, the thunders roar, and the lightnings flash; he cannot see where he is going,

he has no guide, he is inexperienced, he has not prepared for these dangers, and knows not how to grapple with them. He begins to drift rapidly onwards, onwards till he strikes the rock of drink irreligion or debauchery: he sinks and is lost sight of, but one day his soul is found in the pit of hell. How different would have been his end had he remained longer in the harbour of home, and had listened to the advice and counsels of his parents; how different had he clung to his religion, which as an anchor, would have held him safely when the storms of sin and temptation raged around him. But no, he left both, he thought he was wiser than either the church or his parents, and behold the result; a result in many ways due to our so-called intellectual progress, to the godless education of our day. Things have changed very much since Our Lord, as a youth obeyed Joseph and Mary, and to tell many youths to obey and listen to their father and mother seems to insult them. When a youth, now is in the middle of his teens, he believes himself a man and that he must act as such. He goes where he likes, does what he likes, and returns when he likes. His mother may weep and plead, his father scold, but he cares not. If you try to reason with him, to advise him, he is angry and fumes and makes the home a place of misery. "What are you talking about," he will ask, "do you think I do not know what I am doing, do you think I am still a

child?" Such are the words which you will hear from the lips of many mere boys, words which reveal the sentiments of their hearts. Ah! would to heaven they could learn to know and appreciate the lesson conveyed in the words: "And was subject to them."

DRIFTING ON AND SHIPWRECK.

3. Drifting from religion and home.—But if parents fare thus at the hands of the young, the Church, which God has placed over them as a Mother, fares even worse. We are told that the young of the day should be the hope of the Church, and we fear that while they like to hear such praise, they care little to deserve it. There are indeed some model youths, but they are not by any means as numerous as they should be. For many think an Easter Communion quite sufficient, and the young boy thinks himself a saint if he enters Church and hears Holy Mass in any way on the Sunday. But soon he misses, one then many, and little by little he drops away from religion, and the Faith is not in him. He seldom bends his knee in prayer, but he curses often. He knows he should go to the Sacraments, but he never does so. He knows that there are Confraternities attached to his Church, but they are not for him. He is told that there is a Catholic circle in his parish in which he ought to move, but he has no great liking for religious people:

that there is a Catholic Club where he may enjoy himself, but it is "far too slow" for him. He neglects prayer, forgets his Catechism, hates sermons and there is a wonderful transformation in his life. Let him be decently dressed, have a few shillings to spare, and then neither priests nor parents must speak to him. There is an evening service at the Church, but he prefers the opera. Here is a Catholic Magazine, he requires a sporting paper. There is a collection at the Church for the poor, he has little enough to pay for his amusements. He becomes one of a crowd of gay young fellows, stops out to all hours, and where he has been or what he was doing you must not ask. You hear his parents ask, when was he at Confession last, and what is his answer? "Ask a child that, not me." If we follow him and his companions, we will soon hear their indelicate talk, their curses, their mockery of all that is good and holy. Here is the youth drifting further and further away, from the safety of home and religious life. The whole atmosphere around him is impregnated with irreligion and sin. Weak and helpless for want of grace because he does not pray, he is like the mariner who casts away his anchor and has nothing to hold him. The youth thinks only of getting on in the world, of amusing himself and he casts away his safeguard, his religion, and he drifts on, onwards, till he strikes the rocks on which he perishes. What a sad

contrast to the Son of Mary, to Him of Whom it is written; "And He was subject to them."

4. The rock of intemperance.—One of the rocks on which these drifting youths often strike, is that of intemperance. In the drinking saloon he finds congenial companions, they treat him, and he treats them, and gradually he falls. He takes just a little too much drink at first, but he is not so careful another time; and soon the mother has her child coming home, frequently, if not always drunk. Ah! once the demon of drink gets hold of a youth, God have pity upon his poor soul. Look at the dissipated, poverty-stricken, idle young fellow, that stands so often at the street corners, what is he? A drunkard. Listen to the poor maniac who yells and curses in the asylum, what was he? A drunkard. Go into our prisons and ask many why they are there, and they will tell you through drink. Who is it, that is so often sentenced by magistrates? The drunkard. Who is it that many times have ended their lives on the scaffold? According to their own confessions, the drunkards. But it is seldom that a youth becomes a drunkard at once, he will boast that he knows how far to go; yet it is an undeniable fact that the moderate drinkers, develop a habit of drinking and turn out drunkards. And when a youth or man is drunk he is partially mad and insane, and continual drinking will unhinge and destroy his reason, and make him a maniac for

years, if not for ever. In this state of mind a man is open to commit any crime no matter how serious, and hence he is often sent to prison. But generally speaking to send a youth to prison, is to send him to utter ruin, and once there he is often there. For, the youth that has been in prison is disgraced in the sight of the community, and this makes it more easy for him to sink lower and lower in the social grade, and in the moral state, till at last he becomes the mere scum, the outcast of society. When the youth becomes a drunkard, then the ship is wrecked, but the soul is still floating onwards, on nearer and nearer perhaps to the abyss of hell.

5. **The rock of gambling.**—Gambling is another rock on which many perish. The youth who drinks and treats others, who goes to every amusement, who mixes with all kinds of companions is not averse to cards and dice, and to gambling in every other possible way. Money that perhaps should be spent in buying food for his poor parents is lost thus, but he cares not. But more than this, the youth who drinks so much, and bets so much, is often badly in need of money, and he does not scruple to rob his employer, or anyone else, to satisfy his needs. He takes a certain amount and thinks he will pay it back without being caught; he takes more still hoping he may be able to refund it, but things do not turn out as he wished, he loses on all sides, he is suspected, he is caught, and then

imprisonment generally follows. But in how many cases do we find something more painful still. The youth who has taken his master's money, cannot face the world again as a thief, and he sometimes takes his life with his own hands and is laid in a suicide's grave. Alas! all this is only too true, the records of our prisons, and the news in the journals of the day prove this; it requires no further comment.

6. The rock of immorality.—Yet there is still another rock, more dangerous because more hidden and secret, the rock of immorality. Terrible indeed is the vice of debauchery and immorality which takes hold of so many youths. They can scarcely speak to one another without sensuality being their topic; they seldom think of anything else, their bodies and souls seem saturated with it. There is no vice which so degrades a man as this, none which so utterly ruins the mind, none which so frequently hardens and blinds the heart to all that is good and noble. When a youth gives way to sensuality and it becomes habitual to him, it is like a strong iron chain, which the devil welds round him, so difficult, so hard is it, to break away from the sin. And as each indulgence but draws the chain tighter, the youth must resist this vice in the beginning, and pray earnestly and continually for help, lest like the small spark which causes a great fire, indulgence produce a continual craving of the flesh.

But though it be terrible enough to ruin one's own body and soul, yet it is still more fearful to corrupt and ruin others; yet our so-called men often ruin under the guise of affection, poor silly creatures who trust them, and associate with them. This they do with a callousness and hardness of heart which is truly astounding; nay, the more souls they ruin, the more they make like themselves, the more wise and clever they think themselves. The murderer tried on earth and found guilty receives no mercy, and what mercy can these youths expect, when at the great trial on the Day of Judgement they are charged with the murder of those souls, whom they have in such a terrible way ruined, and led into the most vile sins. God help them in that hour, there will be no mercy then.

Conclusion.—Brethren, what is the remedy for this most terrible evil of our time? Surely it must be this, that parents must be firm and consistent in the training of their children, not only as youths but much more so when they are in their tender years. Begin with the child early, be firm yet loving, never let it become in any way the master of you. Without being cruel correct it when required, and it will grow up to love and obey you. On the other hand, if you pet it, indulge it, and give it everything it wants, when it grows older it will neither fear you, listen to you, nor obey you. Be careful also, to instil into its mind, sound religious

principles as soon as possible, and be sure that you see yourself how it attends to its religious duties. To youths we would say; "Study the life of Our Lord, and strive to grasp the striking lesson which He has given to you. You are young and inexperienced, and know little or nothing of the trials, the difficulties and dangers which you will meet in your journey through life. Why become a wreck, an outcast of society, the mere scum of the earth, what good will this do you? Listen to your parents then, drink in their counsels and advice; attend to and learn all you can about your religion, and carry out what it teaches. You are the hope of the Church, you she wishes to mould into good, honest, holy men, so that you may, when the proper time comes, go out into the world, and by your good example and holy lives, you may help to make others good, and help to sanctify the world. Do not then start too soon from your home the harbour of refuge, but stay as long as you can, and prepare well to face the future; imitate Him of Whom it is written: 'And he was subject to them.'"

THE PILGRIM'S DUTY.

SYNOPSIS.

The Pilgrims Duty.

"And Jesus advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace, with God and men."
—St. Luke ii. 52.

The folly of not Advancing in Grace.

1. What advancement have we made?
2. The utter folly of such conduct.
3. The barren fig tree.
4. Many are dying now.

How to Advance in Grace.

5. We must be determined to advance.
6. We must watch, and we must pray fervently.
7. We must avoid occasions of sin.
8. We must frequently approach the Sacraments.

Conclusion . . Perform duties of state perfectly: Résumé.

THE PILGRIM'S DUTY.

(SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY).

"And Jesus advanced in wisdom, and age and grace with God and men."
—St. Luke ii. 52.

INTRODUCTION.

A time for serious thought.—The commencement of the new year, brethren, is a memorable event in anyone's life. Its occurrence is a signal for deep thought, seriousness, and determination. No mind is rightly constituted, that can pass over the threshold of a new year with its many dangers and untried perils, and not feel many of his hopes and fears starting up alarmed. Consequently, it is a time when we should pause and consider earnestly, what we are and what we should be, what we do, and what we ought not to do; remembering as we should, that each year as it passes, brings us nearer to the day when we must face our Eternal Judge, and receive from Him the sentence that will settle our fate for ever.

THE FOLLY OF NOT ADVANCING IN GRACE.

1. What advancement have we made?—The Gospel of this morning concerning Our Lord, is peculiarly fitting for this time of the year, because it contains an example, which we ought now

especially to copy, and which will direct us in the several stages of our lives. For whatever other things a man may do whilst he is on earth, his principal, nay his only business, is to advance in virtue to grow in grace. Whatever else he does, it will not profit him when life is over, when the number of years allotted to him have passed. Man is but a pilgrim on earth, he has not here a lasting city, Heaven is his home. Yet it is the pilgrim's duty to advance, and therefore he should never allow the sun to set, without being as near to Heaven, as he is to his grave. What then we must ask has been our progress? Have we gained ground as rapidly over our passions, as we have increased in years? Have we advanced in grace as far as we have in age? Are we any better now than we were at this time last year? Alas many of us are greater sinners now than we were then. During the past twelve months what kind of lives have we led? Some have given themselves up to the curse of intemperance and its attendant evils, far more frequently than they did in former years. Many women who used to gossip now and then, have in the past year become habitual backbiters, calumniators or detractors. By their stories they have caused neighbours to hate and injure each other; and they have robbed many of their character, and have scandalised those whom they have led into the same habit of detracting. Others there are who have neglected the due

observance of the Sabbath, and have put aside prayer and the Sacraments. Some have given way to a habit of immorality and live for nothing but this, as though there were no future, no judgment, no hell. Great God, if we truly and seriously try to find out all the sins we committed during the past twelve months, how numerous have been our crimes, how great the debt of punishment due to them. But if we multiply these crimes of last year by the number of years we have been allowed to live, then indeed our sins might be compared to a mountain of iniquity, terrific in its height and aspect. Instead then of increasing in grace as we grow older, we have increased in evil and wickedness, and even though some of us may be young in years, yet we are old in sin. How, if we continue to act thus, will all end? There can be only one end to such lives as these, and that end is utter ruin, the loss of our souls and eternal perdition in hell. Beyond doubt then, we should now especially consider the example of Our Lord, Who as He advanced in age, also advanced in wisdom and grace.

2. The utter folly of such conduct.—Consider for a moment the utter folly we exhibit if we continue to act in this way. The year that we have just entered upon may be our last, and no sane man will assert, that he is sure he will live through the whole of it. Therefore we need no proof to convince the judgment that death may be near,

but we need earnest meditation to impress this upon our hearts. God is the Master of life. He can measure out the number of our days according to His pleasure. No man can promise himself another day of life, nay, not even another hour. Youth cannot secure it, since many are carried off on the very verge of manhood. Perfect health cannot guarantee it, for in an hour's serious illness the most perfect constitution may be ruined. This is quite evident, without our mentioning the many accidents to which we are exposed, or the many sudden, violent, and terrible deaths, which come continually under our notice. Who does not remember the rich man spoken of in the Gospel of St. Luke (xii. 16). This man's lands had produced such rich crops of fruit, that he had not room enough to store the fruit away, and so he thought within himself that he would pull down his barns, build larger ones, and having stored his goods he would live in ease and luxury. "And I will say to my soul: Soul thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy rest; eat, drink, and make good cheer" (St. Luke xii. 19). So reasoned this man within his heart, but how foolish was his conduct. For God said to him; "Thou fool; this night do they require thy soul of thee" (Ver. 20). How sudden the warning here. What is the warning which Christ gives to us all? "Watch ye therefore, because you know not what hour your Lord will come" (St.

Matt. xxiv. 42). Who then indeed, will dare to assert that death is far distant, or that he will yet enjoy many years of life? Death may even at this very moment be quite near to us, and we know not the moment that it may strike us.

3. The barren fig tree.—The parable of the barren fig tree related by St. Luke (Chap. xiii. 6), also contains for us a most striking lesson. "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and found none. And he said to the dresser of the vineyard: Behold for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down therefore, why cumbereth it the ground? But he answering said to him: Lord let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it. And if happily it bear fruit: but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down" (Ver. 7-9). What is the parable of the barren fig tree, but a vivid picture of the Christian who is barren of good works? Christ has planted such a one in His Church by faith and Baptism, and watered his soul with many graces and favours; yet because that faith is almost dead, because the favours have been rejected, such a soul produces no fruit. Christ comes time after time seeking for the fruit, and when He continually finds none, what will be his commands? His justice orders it to be cut down, but His mercy pleads that the sinner may be allowed another time of trial. During that

time God urges that soul in every way possible to repent and be converted, and He most willingly offers every grace that it requires to enable it to turn from its wickedness. But think yet a moment of what the dresser or caretaker of the vineyard said to his master. "Lord, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it. And if happily it bear fruit: but if not, then thou shalt cut it down." Behold the fate of the tree unless it produce fruit. It is to be cut down, and no doubt after that it will be cast into the fire. Does not a similar fate await the sinner, unless he changes his life and produces good works? Year after year Our Lord has pleaded with him, has urged him to repent, to do penance, and to give up his sins. And if he will not and continues to sin, continues to offend God, then he will be punished. God will not be merciful at all times, for justice at some time will demand the sinner's punishment. Ah, what folly to cry out, "God is good," whilst we continually offend Him. This is presumption, this is madness, this is an offence in itself. What wonder then if the command of God go forth concerning such a sinner, what wonder if He say; "Cut him down, why cumbereth he the earth?" And what will then be the end of this poor soul but eternal torment in the pit of hell.

4. Many are dying now.—Many now are on their deathbeds, and before long they will have

passed away. And yet a little while ago they were strong and healthy, and as likely to live as any of us. Nay, many are now in their graves who a few weeks ago, had a better prospect of living longer than those they left behind. Are our lives then more secure than theirs were? Are we not made of the same clay, do we not run the same risks? What reason then have we to promise ourselves the privilege of a long life, when it is so often denied to other mortals? Does not all this point out to us, that the moment of death is very uncertain, and that we know not whether we will see much of this year, much less the entrance of another? And when we consider what is at stake, that it means for us Heaven or hell, then we must know that it is downright madness for us to continue in sin. Many are the miserable souls now in hell, who whilst on earth delayed their conversion, thinking they would live years longer, but death struck them suddenly, and they were lost. Are we to imitate them, and thus follow them to utter ruin? God forbid such folly.

HOW TO ADVANCE IN GRACE

5. We must be determined to advance.—We have now seen the folly of continuing our evil course, of not advancing in grace, let us then turn to the other side of our subject, and see what we must do to advance, how we must act to increase in grace as

we do in years. The first thing we must do, is to be determined. We know that we are in the world for this very purpose, we know too that it is of the utmost moment for us to do so, yet whilst this thought is casually in our intellects, it has not really entered our hearts, nor is it deeply imprinted on them. Consequently we make no great effort to go forward, and our will is fluctuating, unstable and weak. There are some people who go through life as though they were dreaming, and they only fully awake when they are approaching the Judgment Seat of God. They look back upon their past life, and all seems obscure and covered with haze and mist. There are links in these lives which are detached from one another, there are paths which now seem unconnected, and these people are at a loss to know, how they got from one to the other. Now one thing here is certain. They have gone through life, without a fixed purpose, without realising that they have a part to play, and all this has happened from the fact that such persons never had any fixed determination of will. They did not seize the events of daily life and turn them to account, but they fell in with things just as they came, and instead of ruling events, they allowed events to rule them. We must now at least wake up from this state of stupor, and realise fully, that we must work for Heaven, or we will be in the greatest danger of losing it. This fact must sink

deeply into our hearts, and we must therefore make Heaven the aim and object of our whole lives, and the desire to gain it must enter into, must control, and must direct, all our thoughts, words, and actions. We must be firmly determined to advance in grace, so that we may be worthy of Heaven. This determination, must not be some mere empty promise, nor a resolution made to-day only to be broken tomorrow, but it must on the contrary be a fixed, unchangeable, enduring resolution. The house that is founded on the solid and immoveable rock, does not give way when hurricanes blow or rains fall, so neither will our determination yield to the tempest of temptations, if it be truly firm. We have met no doubt with a certain class of people whom we call stubborn. They are resolved to do this or that, which may be evil or dangerous, and no matter what we say to them, no matter what argument we adduce, they will not yield they are determined. Such people have what we call a strong will. Well, so must our will be strong, stubborn, firmly determined, not to yield to temptations nor sin, no matter what the devil, the world, or the flesh may say. But on the contrary we will listen to reason, and to the inspirations of God, directing us how to increase in grace. We will make use of every possible means to enable us to do so. Be determined. If we spoke for hours we could say nothing more powerful, nothing more emphatic than this. Be determined to advance,

and renew this resolution as often as possible, keep it continually before your eyes, and in your hearts.

6. We must watch, and we must pray fervently.—But beyond having his determination, we must also watch and pray continually and fervently. Our Lord before His Sacred Passion, said to His Apostle Peter: "Watch ye, and pray that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (St. Mark xiv. 38). Thus did Christ warn St. Peter, but the Apostle fell asleep and did not watch nor pray, and when temptation came, he fell and denied Our Lord. The word "watch" has here a very distinct meaning. We might transpose it thus: "Watch and be most careful, not alone with regard to your enemies, but more especially watch over yourselves." Then Christ immediately gives the reason why we must watch. "The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak." As though he said: "I know your spirit is willing, I know you are determined, but still do not trust to your own strength, for remember that though you are determined in spirit, yet your flesh is weak." If such a warning was given to the Apostle is it not far more applicable to us? If it was necessary for him who had been called to the Apostolate to pray, it is indeed far more so for such weak, unstable, and changeable beings as we are. Of all the duties of a Christian, none is so often, or so strongly enforced as that of prayer. Our Lord recommended

it in almost every one of His divine instructions, and composed a sublime form of prayer to engage, and encourage us in the practice thereof. "Amen, amen I say to you; if you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you" (St. John xvi. 23). And again Christ says: "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you" (St. Matt. vii. 7). Yet again does Our Lord speak of prayer, and teaches, that, "we ought always to pray and not to faint." (St. Luke xviii. 1). The Apostles following the example of their Divine Master, in all their writings do their utmost to enforce the duty of prayer. "Ask in faith," says St. James, "nothing wavering" (i. 6). St. Paul bids us, "pray without ceasing" (1. Thess. v. 17). But we must be careful that our prayers, though continual, be fervent, and said with the proper dispositions. Carelessness, inattention, pride and vanity, must not accompany our prayers, or they will cause God not to hear us. We must pray with reverence, on account of the presence of God; with humility because of our unworthiness; we must pray with attention, that is we must try to say the words properly, and endeavour to grasp their sense, whilst we think of the end for which we pray. We must persevere in our prayers, and continually ask God for those graces required for the salvation of our souls. Prayer indeed is in a special manner, that which will help

us to advance in grace and holiness, since prayer is specially ordained to bring down God's grace upon us, that it may enable us to resist the suggestions of the evil one.

7. We must avoid occasion of sin.—The warning which Christ gave to the Apostle, may be taken in yet another sense. "Watch ye, and pray that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak." Here Our Lord not only warns those, who, relying on their own strength recklessly rush into temptations and fall into sin, but we may take it, that He also warns us to watch over ourselves, and keep away from that which might lead us into temptation; in other words, we are to avoid all occasion of sin. "Watch," that is, take care, that you may not by any means be drawn into the danger of being tempted, and not only watch, but pray also, that God may keep you from any occasion of temptation. This is the sense of the petition which Our Lord Himself placed in His sublime prayer, the Our Father. "Lead us not into temptation." Here we pray that God may guard us and keep us away from all occasions of sin, and that He may give us grace, never to yield to any suggestions of the devil, the world or the flesh. Here then we see, how earnestly God inculcates upon us, the necessity of avoiding occasions of temptation and sin. St. Paul tells us also that our warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against

principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world. At one time these enemies attack us in open force, at another they act secretly, again they act deceitfully. They are full of malice and their cunning is equal to their malice. Notwithstanding this, there are some of us, who to our shame be it said, dally with them, and are drawn into occasions of sin, witnout necessity, without any reason, and merely to gratify a vain curiosity, to indulge a friend, or to agree with the principles of the world. What fearful rashness there is in this. What follows? Usually the loss of God's grace, for without God's grace we can do nothing to escape the dangers that everywhere surround us. When men rush headlong into danger, without any defence but their own weakness, dismal indeed are the effects that follow. We see these effects daily. Here is the young libertine, who became such by keeping evil company. Here is the fallen woman, who by novel reading stores her mind with fantastic ideas, and sets morality adrift. Here is a man, who has become a drunkard again, because he did not avoid the house where he always met the apostles of vice. Surely these dreadful examples ought to fill us with terror, ought to make us discreet, and cause us to avoid every possible occasion of sin. Our Lord has told us that he who loveth the danger will perish in it. Hence He says: "Watch and pray." Watch and keep from occa-

sions of sin so as to prevent danger; but if we are attacked or taken by surprise, then we must pray earnestly, and fervently. There is grace waiting for us if we ask for it, grace that will enable us to overcome every temptation, if we seek it through prayer. The devil may surprise and tempt us, but he cannot overcome us if then we fly to God, and early beseech Him to help us. Satan may bark but he cannot then hurt us. We must then be vigilant, we must be most watchful, or the weakness of our sinful nature, the number and power of our enemies, or the flattery and deceit of the world, will lead us into the greatest dangers, in the midst of which we will fall and offend God, and lose his grace. Watch then and pray, and avoid all occasions of sin, all persons, places, books, amusements, or hours of idleness and sloth, which you know from sad experience to be dangerous to you, or which might in the future lead you into temptation or sin.

8. We must frequently approach the sacraments.—Another means of advancing in grace is to approach frequently the Sacraments of Penance, and the Holy Eucharist. The Sacrament of Penance, is not only a means of obtaining the forgiveness of our sins, but is also a wholesome and powerful preservative against sin. To understand this we must know, that the Sacraments have a double effect. The first consists in conferring

sanctifying grace which makes us pleasing to God; the second effect consists in their conferring actual and particular graces adapted to the end and institution of the Sacrament we receive. Hence the peculiar end of the Sacrament of Penance, is to heal the soul of the deformity and spiritual death caused by sin, and to infuse new life, with the full vigour of spiritual health. It follows from this, that the man who confesses properly, not only receives the forgiveness of his sins, but is also entitled in virtue of the Sacrament, to additional graces and assistances, by which he is enabled to preserve the justice and righteousness he received in the Sacrament. Hence masters of the spiritual life have always looked upon Confession, as the most effectual remedy for curing the weakness of the soul, uprooting evil habits, restraining and subjecting the senses to the Gospel; and forming a man solidly in the habits of virtue and justice. Nor must we pass over the many virtues which accompany Confession. The act of revealing onr sins shows humility, the act of contrition contains a durpose of amendment and reformation, a commencement of a true and supreme love for God. And when we go to Confession do we not receive advice and guidance from God's minister, and is not this advice and guidance most helpful to us? Whether therefore we consider the Sacrament of Penance in itself or in its attendant circumstances,

it is a most powerful preservative against sin, a most powerful means of advancing in grace.

The Holy Eucharist is another most abundant fountain of grace, and the most valuable blessings flow from a worthy Communion. Holy writers all agree that, in this Sacrament, God pours into the heart of man such abundant graces, that would necessarily raise him and fix him, in a state of sanctity, were his heart capable of receiving them. It is only insurmountable obstacles on the side of man that hinders this. Since Christ has declared, that His Flesh is truly meat, it follows that it must have the same effect upon the soul that material food has upon the body; namely, the effect of keeping it alive, and preserving it in full health, vigour, and strength. Behold we can see the effects of this Divine Food almost daily. Men whose passions make them furious like lions, are changed as though lambs. The inveterate sinners are changed into pious men. The passions of men are subdued, their evil habits removed, and cold Christians are made fervent and zealous. Where then could we find a more powerful means of helping us to advance in God's grace, than these two great Sacraments these fountains of grace? We must then earnestly, zealously and properly, approach them frequently.

Conclusion.—Brethren, we have not dwelt upon every means you should take to help you to increase

in grace, to advance in holiness, since time will not permit this. But we might ask you here, to be most careful and strive to perform the duties of your state of life, with the greatest possible perfection. This will help you much in your advancement. And now, in this beginning of the year, remember that death may be very near you, and if you have not increased in grace, it is time now at least to begin to do so. Not a moment must be lost, for should death strike you in a state of serious sin you are then lost for ever. Do not plan a long life or many years more for yourself, remember the rich man who was struck down, when his barns were full and he was planning enjoyment. Forget not the barren fig tree, the picture of the sinner barren of good works, "Cut him down why cumbereth he the earth." Be determined then to advance, be men and women who pray earnestly, and avoiding occasions of sin, frequently approach the holy Sacraments. Think seriously, meditate often upon the example of Our Lord, Who, as He advanced in age, also advanced in grace.

THE SEED OF THE WORD.

SYNOPSIS.

The Seed of the Word.

"*Take heed therefore how you hear.*"—St. Luke viii. 18.

Introduction . . The Sublimity of God's Word.

How we should prepare ourselves to hear Sermons

1. By coming with the desire that the sermon may be useful.
2. By being full of sorrow for our past neglect of sermons.
3. By removing from our hearts all obstacles to God's Word.

How and with what Actual dispositions should we hear Sermons

4. We must listen with great respect and humility.
5. We must apply all to ourselves and not others.
6. We must select some special point to meditate on.

Conclusion . . Résumé of Points.

THE SEED OF THE WORD.

(SEXAGESIMA.)

"*Take heed therefore how you hear.*"—St. Luke viii. 18.

INTRODUCTION.

The Sublimity of God's Word.—Nothing, my brethren, can give us a better idea of the sublimity and power of God's Word, than the figures used by Christ to foretell its effects. At one time He compares it to a two-edged Sword, which is so powerful and strong, that it will conquer the world and subject all men to the yoke of the Cross. At another He likens it to a divine fire, which quickly spreading fills the hearts of men with love, and makes them fearless and brave like the martyrs of old. Now it is the mysterious leaven, which joins and re-unites the whole, and brings all whether Greek or Barbarian to the feet of God. Again it is compared to bread the most natural food of man, showing, that the Gospel is the proper and solid nourishment of man's soul. But to-day it is likened to the seed which falls upon the earth, yielding in some cases a hundredfold, but far less in others. And what is the cause of this diversity, why such a difference? The seed is the same, the Sower is the same, but alas the soil is different. The hearts of men are

not alike, their dispositions vary, and so does the harvest that is expected. Some indeed will only hear sermons when they cannot help it; others come with stony hearts full of pride and criticism, and a great number hear sermons in an indifferent way, without any benefit whatever to themselves. "Take heed how you hear." Oh God! if men understood the terrible warning contained in these few words, how they would tremble. Christ Himself has just been preaching to a vast multitude upon this very subject, upon the way men listened to His Word, and the little fruit they derived from it; and then He tells them to take heed how they hear; for, it is the manner, or way, in which the Word is received, that makes the harvest so different. Surely the warning of Our Lord is required even more now than it was then, and we must ask: How we should prepare ourselves to hear sermons, and with what disposition should we actually listen to them?

HOW WE SHOULD PREPARE OURSELVES TO HEAR SERMONS.

1. By coming with a desire that the Sermon may be useful.—The first preparation we must make, is to come with the desire that the sermon may be useful to us. This is of the utmost importance, for if the seed falls on unprepared ground we need expect no harvest, and what is the soil but our own hearts which are at our own disposal. To

come then with the desire, that the discourse may be useful, will include many other things, which will cause the Word of God to take deep root in our souls. For such a desire will naturally make us look into our hearts, and find there many things which are deficient, many faults which are growing upon us, many virtues which are either absent entirely, or have little root there. Thus knowing our wants, we shall be able to pick out from the sermon those points which are most suitable to us, for no doubt it will contain many such, which we shall find if we listen with care and attention. Yet even were the sermon not useful at the present moment, still we must notice, that some of it may be of the greatest utility hereafter; for beyond doubt circumstances will arise, and we shall be placed in a position, when, if we have listened carefully, we shall find, that the words of the preacher are most suitable and applicable to our needs. Behold then the vast importance of such a preparation as this is, and hence before coming to the Church, ask the Eternal Father to give power to His Word, to overcome every obstacle that may oppose it in your hearts, and to fix firmly in those hearts, the good inspirations which will knock at them during the sermon, in order that you may afterwards put them into practice. Make this preparation carefully remembering Christ's words: "Take heed how you hear."

2. By being full of sorrow for past neglect of Sermons.—The second preparation we must make, is that being full of grief and shame, that we have reaped so little fruit, from the great number of sermons we have already heard. Of all the duties of Christian piety, none is more externally complied with than that of hearing God's Word. People flock to hear sermons and one would think they must be holy, yet of all the ministries confided to the Church of God, there is none perhaps so unprofitable as that of preaching. Never perhaps were sermons more frequent that in our day, yet how poor is the harvest. What an awful thing is this! How many times have you heard from the pulpit, words of truth which came home to your souls, and caused you to make good resolutions, few of which you have ever carried out; you went forth from the Church and almost the very next hour you forgot them, and the cares of business, or the pleasures of the world choked them. You have heard many sermons which touched your hearts, and you resolved to change your life but have not done so, and if you continue acting in this way, what will the end be? Surely here you have a cause for grief and shame, a reason to tremble when you think of Christ's warning: "Take heed how you hear."

3. By removing from our hearts all obstacles to God's Word.—Another important remote preparation, is to remove from our hearts all obstacles

that would hinder God's Word from taking root in our souls. Unless the weeds are taken out of the garden, they will grow up and choke the flowers that are planted there, and so it is with our hearts which is the soil on which the Word of God falls; that Word will never produce much fruit, if we allow these hearts to remain full of rank weeds, full of obstacles, which either hinder it from taking root at all, or will quickly choke whatever fruit it produces. These obstacles are many and numerous, and vary with the temperament or character of the individual, but a few may be noticed here. Some there are who listen to a sermon with attention, but only that it may be a subject of conversation hereafter; they like to compare different preachers, and above all they like to criticise sermons. Now criticism savours of pride and self consciousness, it shows that we have a great esteem for our own opinion, and like to parade it. There is nothing more detrimental to our profitably hearing the Word of God, than this vice, this spirit of criticism; for it is founded on pride, and if there is one virtue more than another required in a disciple or pupil, it is that of humility. The humble man will listen and learn even from a child, but the proud man thinks himself equal to, if not better than others, and therefore what they say, makes little or no impression upon him. But again this spirit of criticism has another dreadful effect. Whilst a

person is busy criticising a sermon, he does not see how it applies to himself; for his mind is, so to speak, diverted from himself to another subject, to the sermon as a theme to be criticised, and hence the discourse never takes root in his soul. What a fearful evil this is, how can such a man ever reach the end for which God made him?

Another, whose heart contains a good deal of pride, is far too sensitive, and should the sermon touch upon his faults he at once becomes angry and disdainful. He knows he has these faults but he will not be told about them; and when God's Word paints them in their true colours, he rebels and will not listen, and often treats the sermon with the greatest contempt. We need not point out, that this conduct utterly hinders the sermon from doing any good in such a soul.

A third person will listen to every word in a careless sort of a way, but without any thought of reducing what he hears to practice. He has come to Church, to be present at the Divine Mysteries, and the moment comes when the sermon has to be preached, and he listens to it because it seems part of the service, but that is all. It strikes his ear, but never enters his heart, it does not interest him, and he would listen to any indifferent thing in the same way. There can be no benefit from hearing God's Word in such a manner.

And yet a fourth person will listen with rapt

attention to the preacher's words, and seem to drink in every little detail, but lo, and behold, what conclusion does he arrive at? He is often heard to remark, that the sermon was capital, and meant for so-and-so, it just suited them exactly. Poor deluded soul he does not remember that the sermon was meant for all, and perhaps suited himself better than any other person present. Behold here another obstacle which hinders the Word of God from doing its work, behold here another device of Satan, which he often uses in what concerns our soul's good; namely, the withdrawing of our attention from ourselves and fixing it upon other persons or things, because of this, we do not see our faults, and not seeing them we do not cast them from us, and hence we go on sinful and full of crimes, perhaps to the end.

Here then are a few of the obstacles, which hinder the Divine Word from producing fruit in our souls; and before we come to Church we must examine ourselves, and see if any of these or others lurk in our hearts, and if they do tear them out, remembering Our Lord's awful words: "Take heed how you hear."

HOW AND WITH WHAT ACTUAL DISPOSITIONS SHOULD WE HEAR SERMONS.

4. We must listen with great respect and humility. — If such, brethren, should be our

remote preparation before we come to Church at all, how, and with what dispositions should we listen to a sermon whilst it is actually being delivered? Our first actual disposition must be to listen with the greatest possible respect and humility; respect because we are listening to the Word of God, and humility because God is explaining His Holy Will and Commandments to us. This will be very clear to us if we examine Christ's words to His Apostles when He sent them out to convert the world. "Go," He said, "and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (St. Mark xvi. 15-16). And again He says: "He that heareth you heareth Me and he that despiseth you despiseth Me" (St. Luke x. 16). Notice the words, "preach the gospel;" for here we see that Christ sends His Apostles to preach the Gospel to every creature, and that implies an obligation upon every creature to listen to it; in fact only those who hearing it believe and profess it, shall be saved. And does not Our Lord most distinctly say that when we hear the Apostles we hear Him, for the Apostles were His representatives and Ambassadors? Now the Apostles are dead, yet others have rightly and lawfully succeded them, and taken their place with the same powers and ministry, and when they speak like the Apostles of old, they preach the

Gospel of Christ. Surely nothing more is needed to convince us, that when the lawful successors of the Apostles preach the Gospel, they are preaching the Word of God: "He that heareth you heareth Me." With what humility, with what awe and respect then, should we listen to every sermon. To be disrespectful, to criticise, or to treat a sermon with contempt, is to criticise and be disrespectful to Christ Himself. "He that heareth you heareth Me, he that despiseth you," that is your preaching, "despiseth Me." Behold then in the first place how we should hear the sermon, lest we not alone lose the fruit of it, but also insult Our God. "Take heed how you hear."

5. We must apply all to ourselves and not others.—God then by His command has imposed upon His priests an obligation to preach the Gospel, and therefore an obligation on us to listen to them. "He only that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." But we cannot believe the Word of God, unless we hear it and learn it; the Word of God is Divine, and carries with it a Divine Authority. It is not the word of man that you hear from the pulpit but the Word of God, Who, from all eternity, destined the priest to preach it to you and you to listen to him; and every word should be heard quietly, respectfully, and attentively, with a view of putting it into practice. You must listen then with the greatest attention, remembering, that it

is meant for you as well as others. What would happen, if everyone thought the sermon was for his neighbour and not for himself? Then sermons would be absolutely useless, since they would be applied to no one. If then you cannot grasp all, take at least the leading thoughts of the discourse, and let them sink deeply into your soul. Do not say the sermon was good, but ask yourself; "What bearing has all this on my daily life? Do I do as the preacher says I should, do I avoid what he tells me to avoid? How can I best apply this instruction which God has given me to my daily life?" This is the proper way, and the proper spirit in which to hear a sermon and to make it practical, and cause God to bless us, and His Word to produce the abundant harvest of which He speaks. Therefore, "Take heed how you hear."

6. By selecting some special point to meditate on.—But this is not all. Not only must we apply the sermon to ourselves, but we must select from each, some special thought or point, on which we must frequently meditate afterwards. It is altogether wrong, to forget the sermon and to put it aside the moment we leave the Church. We must frequently think of it, and continually preach little sermons to ourselves, otherwise the sermon will do us little good. And we must be careful to take home some particular and special point. It is very good to realise that we have been told we

must be holy, we must be saints; but this kind of general resolution is soon forgotten unless we reduce it to some special, particular point. How shall we do this? There is sure to be some part of the sermon, which will have touched our soul more than others. It may have been our carelessness in prayer, our rushing into occasions of sin, or our unkind manner of speaking to others. Here are particular points to which we can direct our attention. We must then take some one of these and determine to act in the matter as the preacher told us. Thus we have a practical point here, and we must determine to keep from occasions of sin, or to be more careful in prayer, or to speak to others kindly. By putting our determination continually in practice, we shall steadily grow in grace and holiness, and the Word of God will thus produce great fruit in our souls. Follow this practice then, and you may be sure it will draw God's blessings down upon you.

Conclusion.—"Take heed how you hear." Brethren, think not that you can treat with levity this most important subject. There is indeed a most terrible warning contained in the Words of Christ. You know well, that your hearts are the soil on which the seed of God's Word falls, and it will not produce a harvest, unless these hearts are properly prepared to receive it. Prepare them then before you come to the Church, by the wish

to make the sermon useful, by sorrow for the past, and by removing any obstacles that may hinder it entering your soul. And, when the sermon is being delivered, remember you are listening to the Word of God Himself, that it is meant for you as well as others; but above all, take home with you some special point which you can often think about and put into practice. Thus indeed will the sermon produce much fruit in your hearts, thus will you have taken notice of Our Lord's warning: "Take heed how you hear."

THE ACCEPTABLE TIME.

SYNOPSIS.

The Acceptable Time.

"Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold now is the day of salvation."
—II. Cor. VI. 2.

Introduction . . The antiquity and meaning of Lent.

Those especially for whom Lent is sent.
1. For the lukewarm Catholic.
2. For the prodigal Catholic.
3. For the good Catholic.

How all should go through Lent.
4. By avoiding sin and giving up amusements.
5. By earnest and fervent prayer.
6. By fasting with a right spirit.
7. By remembering God's poor.
8. By gaining a true knowledge of self.

Conclusion . . Résumé of the good works mentioned.

THE ACCEPTABLE TIME.

(FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT.)

"*Behold, now is the Acceptable time; behold now is the day of salvation.*"— II. Cor. vi. 2.

INTRODUCTION.

The antiquity and meaning of Lent.— Another year, brethren, has gone, and during it new sins have been committed, new debts contracted to the justice of God. Another year of our short life has passed, and with an increased debt, we are a stage nearer to the day of doom, when our fate will be decided for all eternity. Many indeed have since last Lent been called away, though they as little suspected then as we do now, that another time of mercy would not be given them. We must then take the fact, that another Lent is given to us, as another token of the Divine Mercy; and with eagerness and zeal we must seize upon it, and make it the means of obtaining pardon for our sins, and especially for those committed during the past year. Lent is a season of penance, a time of spirtuality imposed upon us, by our Holy Mother the Church, and yet it brings with it, nothing so very terrible or severe. To be content with one good meal each day, to keep away from theatres and such like places: to

stop balls and parties for a season, to go to church more frequently, to pray more fervently, and to approach the Sacraments oftener; surely this is not too much to ask. True indeed these things may be painful to our corrupt nature, but they are meant to be so; for they are to atone for our past sins, and to tame and weaken our passions, lest they, becomeing stronger, get the upper hand of us and lead us to our eternal ruin. Therefore, if we do not feel the sting of Lent, it is but time lost, and this loss will but add to our guilt. Hence we cannot in this light consider Lent difficult or severe. With what joy would a lost soul seize upon the offer of forty days, nay, forty years of penance, if by this means it could escape from its dreadful torments. But no, whilst time has gone for it, the mercy of God has given us yet another Lent, to atone for our sins, and to change our lives.

Since the fall of men fasting has ever been the most powerful means of appeasing God's anger. Nay, it was enjoined upon our first parents even before their fall. The first command given to men, and the only one given in Eden, was one of abstinence. "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat" (Gen. ii. 17). As long as man fasted he remained in Paradise, he was only expelled when he violated this fast; and it is only just that since man had sinned by eating, he should do penance by fasting. That such is the will of God, is proved by

the whole of tradition, by the Old and New and Testaments, by the agreement of the Fathers of the Church, and the example of the Apostles and Our Lord Himself; and finally, through the practice of the Church in every age and clime. There are some indeed who deny the merits of fasting, but we need not heed them. Their doctrine may be summed up in the common saying; "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to morrow we die." This is the saying of libertines, and it only proves, that Lent is fully required, to restrain and correct the sinful appetites and passions of men.

THOSE ESPECIALLY FOR WHOM LENT IS SENT.

1. To the lukewarm Catholic.—Lent is indeed sent to all, but especially to the lukewarm Catholic whom we may now describe. There are many Catholics who are very lukewarm, who do no great harm, and no great good either. They murmur a prayer hastily in the morning, and very often say none in the evening. They hear Holy Mass on the Sunday, go to the Sacraments once or twice in the year, and this is the sum total of their religious life, there their religion ends. But what about the Confraternities of the Church which they might join, what about helping their pastors in the many good works they have on hand; what about loving their neighbour: what about the poor, the sick, and the support they should give to religion? "Oh do not

trouble us about such things," they exclaim irritably, "we are not saints, nor do we pretend to be such." No indeed, they are not saints, they are very far from being such, and this cold formal religion of theirs has very little good in it. What about Charity, of which Our Lord and the Apostles spoke so often? It has little or no root in their hearts, yet without Charity, without this love of God, and man for God's sake, such Catholics cannot save their souls; for their so-called religion is but sentiment, but skin deep, it has not penetrated their hearts, it has not entered into the very marrow of their souls. This may easily be proved, for whilst we hear them magnify the little good they do, they take no notice of their many evil actions. They hesitate not to destroy their neighbour's character; they often tell lies and deceive others; they curse, drink, quarrel, and are often found in the most furious passions. Such Catholics are indeed lukewarm and merely nominal Catholics, and were religion deeply rooted in their hearts, it would restrain them from doing these evil things, from thus giving way to their evil passions. Lent then is meant to bring home to our minds, the realism of a true Christian life; to put aside mere feeling and sentiment, and to bring Christ Our Redeemer and Model before us, by reminding us of His many sufferings and death, which united the broken cord of friendship between God and man. What will it profit us to be Catholics if we live like

mere heathens? Do we know what a Christian is? At the moment of Baptism, we renounced the devil, his works and pomps, and then chose the Son of God as our Captain and Model. We promised to walk in His footsteps, to fight under His banner, and for these reasons we are called Christians, or other Christs. It is not then sufficient for us to be merely nominal Catholics we must be His real, earnest, devoted disciples; and if we wish to go to Heaven we must work for it, as hard and honestly as we do for our daily bread. This is but one mark, one sign that we are His; and we ought to be content to carry about in our bodies, the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies (2. Cor. iv. 11). Any gratification of our passions, any indulgence of our own ease, any aversion to suffering renders us unfit to be Christ's disciples. This we have from the lips of Christ Himself. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (St. Luke ix. 23). Here is a distinct feature in the disciple or follower of Christ, and Lent comes to impress this in the most forcible manner upon the mind of the lukewarm Catholic; so that his cold, empty, formal religion may be changed, and that love of God, and the fire of Charity may enter his soul, that the shadow of religion may give way to the reality, so that from being lukewarm, he may become a true, earnest, fervent Catholic, working

with all his powers to win Heaven, and full of love for both God and man.

2. For the prodigal Catholic.—Then again there are amongst us, many poor prodigals far away from their Father's house. That Father has at all times, at every moment, longed and yearned for their return. But now, during Lent, He no longer remains on the mountain top, but He comes down its sides, gazing long and lovingly into the faces of all He meets, searching for His lost ones. He makes His Ministers go and seek for these poor lost sheep, and when they are found He moves their hearts and causes them to approach Him. "Poor lost one, poor prodigal, your Father is no longer angry, come back and all the past will be forgiven. How did you wander away? The glitter and the gloss of sin dazzled your eyes, and you thought things were, what they are not. You were once a pure sober young man, and evil companions led you away from your Father's house to scenes of debauchery and drunkeness; and little by little you went further away, and by degrees fell lower and lower. Once a child of God, now you are a child of Satan; a drunkard, a blasphemer, a man who curses, swears, and is immoral. And you, young woman were once beautiful in your Father's eyes, but parties, dances and such like things caused you to mix with sinful companions, who led you away from God your Father, and made you hideous in His sight." Do

prodigals know what leaving their Father's home means, what pain they have caused Him? Take a Crucifix in your hand and study each part of it. Who scourged that Sacred Body so cruelly, who so cruelly crowned that loving Head, who spat upon Him and buffeted that beautiful Face, who transfixed those Sacred Hands and Feet? The prodigal especially caused all this torture to be inflicted on Our Lord, by committing mortal sin. And what had your loving Father done that you should thus torture Him? And your own souls, in what state are they? Dead, horrible in the sight of Heaven, they are but the dwelling place of evil and wretchedness, and if you died at this moment what would be your fate? But poor child, God does not wish you to die thus. "As I live saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezechiel xxxiii. 11). "God desires not your death but your conversion; turn to Him, and He turns to you. Listen when He knocks at your hearts, and respond to Him at once. He yearns for you still, His Heart is still full of love for you, His arms open to embrace you and receive you back again. Oh child, can you refuse Him, are you not tired of sin with all the miseries it brings with it? Have you no heart, do you not now love your Father, after all He has done and suffered for you? There is nothing to fear, nothing but love and forgiveness if you approach Him with

a humble and contrite heart. Ah then delay no longer, start up at once, cast away sin, and going to Him say: Father I have sinned against heaven and before Thee I am not now worthy to be called Thy son" (St. Luke xv. 21). What will be the result, what will your loving Father do? Listen, poor erring soul. "Bring forth quickly the first robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry: because this My son was dead and is come to life again; was lost and is found." (Verses 22-23). Fear not then, approach your God and be sure that He will forgive you, that He will strengthen you with His grace, and for the future lead you on in the paths of holiness, and fill you with consolation. Hesitate then not a moment longer, but like the Prodigal in the Gospel, arise and return to your Father.

3. For the good Catholic.—Lent is also sent for the good Catholics, for though they are good and fervent, still, they can and ought, during this holy season, try to be more fervent still. They can pray more, they can read more spiritual works, give greater alms, and set a better example before their neighbours than perhaps they have hitherto done. If they thoroughly enter into themselves and examine minutely the whole of their lives, they will find many blemishes, many imperfections, which they can and should remedy. Let them remember that

not to go forward is to recede, and hence they must now, especially during Lent, renew their courage, redouble their energy, and by every possible, means strive to become more holy and fervent than ever. They must not think they have done enough, for Lent is a time of special graces, and with God's grace, the holy can become much more holy still.

HOW ALL SHOULD GO THROUGH LENT.

4. By avoiding sin and giving up amusements.—And now how must we make the most of Lent, how enter into this holy season and go through it so that we may derive the greatest benefit from it? We must first of all be determined, not only to fast from food, but also from sin, and from all which might lead, to it. This is important at all times, but especially during Lent, for it would be most wicked and absurd to offend God by new crimes, during the very time we are imploring His mercy. Hence, we must now be determined to keep from sin, and we must at every cost avoid occasions of sin, or any circumstance that leads us into sin. It matters not whether the occasions are persons, places, or things, every one of them must be rigidly avoided, and we must keep as far away from them as possible. This is a matter upon which we must be most earnest and determined, if we wish to derive any benefit from Lent. And a mere promise is not sufficient here; we must actively resist our passions when

they urge us to sin, and we must also even with great sufferings and labour, put aside all that causes our passions to tempt us. For this reason also the Church distinctly wishes us to avoid, and to refrain from going to places of amusement, or taking part in such amusements. It would be utterly out of place for us to amuse ourselves and enjoy such things, when we are commemorating the sad and moving scenes in the most Sacred Passion and Death of Christ. It would be indeed most incongruous in us to do so, when we are supposed to be full of sorrow for our sins. We are then bound not only to abstain from sin, but to be more than ever on our guard against the occasions of sin, against persons, places, actions, and everything else, which ever have been or might be now an occasion of temptation.

5. By earnest and fervent prayer.—Lent too is a time for earnest and fervent prayer. St. Thomas tells us that fasting is one of the greatest means that disposes the mind for prayer, by humbling the body and diminishing its passions. But what merit will there be in our prayers unless they are accompanied with humility and contrition? True prayer will bring about that for which Lent is ordained, namely, union between God and our souls. We should then put aside all that would distract us in our prayers, and giving up talking, gossiping and all things else which waste our

time, and instead of spending it idly, we must employ it profitably in prayer. Instead of reading silly novels, we should read spiritual books which furnish food for prayer; instead of visiting our neighbours' houses, we should often visit the Church; instead of talking idly to others, we should commune frequently with God. Such things as these are obligatory during Lent, on those who have time to practise them, and who has not time for many of them, if they will only husband their time, and not spend it idly as they have hitherto done in the service of the world. Such exercises will lead to a collected mind which is most necessary for true prayer. Yet how many are there who are continually gossiping, talking, and busy with the affairs of the world, and they will rush into prayer, into the very presence of God, without one moment's preparation. How many too, pray for things which God knows would endanger our salvation, and when Our loving Father does not grant these things, they become irritable, impatient, and grumble, and then cease to pray altogether, even for those things necessary for salvation. How proud, how careless, how inattentive and indolent are many at their prayers. Yet how can we expect God to hear us if we are not attentive, and how can we be attentive, if we are proud, careless, and indolent at prayer? There are three ways of being attentive at our prayers. The first consists in pronouncing the words distinctly;

the second tries to draw out and dwell upon the meaning and sentiments of the words; but the third and most perfect way, is to unite our hearts and affections with the various sentiments the words express. Too much attention cannot be given, to the manner or way in which we pray. Grace is obtained through prayer, and without grace we cannot save our souls. Hence prayer becomes an absolute necessity for salvation, but here we speak of true earnest prayer, and not of that said without care or attention.

6. **By fasting with a right spirit.**—But not only must we pray fervently during Lent, we must also keep the fast appointed by the Church. "Prayer is good with fasting and alms more than to lay up treasures of gold" (Tobias xii. 8). Our Saviour also has said: "This kind of devil cannot be cast out otherwise than by prayer and fasting" (St. Mark ix. 28). Hence the Scriptures urge us to be converted to God with our whole heart, in fasting and weeping and mourning. The precept of fasting began in Paradise, when God forbade Adam to eat of a certain fruit, under pain of death. In the law of Moses we find it strictly commanded and practised; and it comes to us recommended by the doctrine and example of many of the Saints in the Old Testament. The great solemn fast of Lent is kept in imitation of Our Lord's fast in the desert; and its object is to prepare us, by penance, worthily

to celebrate the memory of His Passion, and dispose us to rise from the spiritual death of sin, to a new life of grace. That this fast was instituted by the Apostles, and observed by the early Christians is shown by the writings of the Fathers of the Church, such as St. Basil (Ser. I. Jegunio), St. Gregory Nicene (Ser. de Inchio Jegun), St. Chrysostom (Hom. v. 6. ad pop. Antioch), St. Augustine (Ser. de Multis), and many others. That fasting is pre-eminently a good work which appeases the wrath of God and draws down His mercies, the Holy Scriptures abundantly prove. Esdras the Prophet and his companions were in grave danger and having fasted, God delivered them out of it. "And we fasted and besought our God for this: and it fell out prosperously unto us" (Esdras viii. 23). The Prophet Joel exhorting his hearers to be converted and prepare to meet God speaks thus: "Be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning" (Joel ii. 12). But how could we find a stronger proof of the efficacy of this holy exercise, than that which we have in the history of Ninive. "Arise," says God to Jonas, "and go to Ninive the great city and preach in it: for the wickedness thereof is come up before Me" (Jonas i. 2). When Jonas obeyed, he entering the city cried out: "yet forty days and Ninive shall be destroyed" (iii 4); and the men of Ninive hearing these words proclaimed a fast and

they put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least. This humility and penance, moved the Heart of God and He forgave them. "And God saw their works, that they were turned from their evil way: and God had mercy with regard to the evil He had said that He would do to them and He did it not" (Jonas iii. 10). Surely then we have proof enough here to show us that fasting is pre-eminently a good work, which we must employ during this season, when we seek to atone for our past sins; yet, in our days, there are many who give scandal by their manner of fasting; many merely abstain from certain qualities and kinds of foods, and by murmuring and complaining, and thus accompany their fast, with impatience and pride, instead of humility, contrition, charity, goodness to the poor, or any other circumstances, which would put vitality or merit, into the mere bodily action. Such conduct is entirely wrong, for it is the intention in the mind which God especially looks to, and therefore such persons lose all the merit they might have gained; and instead of atoning for the sins of the past, they add new ones to them, by their murmurs and impatience. Such a way of acting is capable of destroying, all the benefit which we might gain from Lent. Hence we must be on our guard against such a spirit as this, and let our fast be accompanied with cheerfulness and resignation, with contrition and humility, knowing as we do, how

vile we are, and how great is the punishment our sins deserve.

7. By remembering God's poor.—But prayer and fasting worthy as both are, must not be alone, but united with works of mercy both corporal and spiritual. It is but fitting that we who expect mercy from God, should show it to our fellow man. "Prayer is good with fasting and alms more than to lay up treasures of gold. For alms delivereth from death, and the same is that which purgeth away sins, and maketh to find mercy and life everlasting" (Tobias xii. 8-9). These words of the Sacred Scriptures prove to us the value of almsgiving. And as in the past, our lives and actions may have injured others, so now let us try to help them, in all that our means will permit. If we fast, we can give to the widow what we deny ourselves. If we stay away from places of amusement, we can give what we save to the fatherless child. If we go often to Church, we can pray for hardened sinners, and ask God to melt their stony hearts. It is in our power to forgive injuries and to bear with the troublesome, to pray for the living and the dead. These were the favourite works of Our Lord when on earth, and with what delight, with what love did He accomplish them. No one in pain or in misery ever appealed to Him in vain. So full of love was His Sacred Heart for the lowly and afflicted, that His eyes ever seemed to be searching, and His

Heart yearning for them. In many cases He did not wait to be asked, but immediately helped and cured others. Most of His stupendous miracles, by which He proved His Divinity and the truth of His doctrines, had for their object, the relief of the distressed or the comfort of the afflicted. He has told us that whatever we do to His brethren, He takes as done to Himself. Fail not then in every way you can to help the poor, and in this look to the example of Christ and imitate Him. Yet we must not forget that those who are poor in this world's goods, are often still more destitute in spiritual things. We should then be careful to give good example to such, pray for them often; show them what religion is, what it urges us to do for them. There are many spiritual works of mercy which we can perform during Lent. In a quiet unostentatious way we can instruct the ignorant, comfort the sorrowful, counsel the doubtful, visit the sick, and perform many other good actions, according to our circumstances and position in life.

8. By gaining a true knowledge of self.—Another thing we must do during this time of penance is, to gain a true and exact knowledge of ourselves. To do this we must look into every nook and corner of our souls. We must not shirk this matter, for we cannot shirk it after death. Then, in the twinkling of an eye, God will show us what we really are with all our many faults and imper-

fections. We must not be afraid to know ourselves for such knowledge will not injure us, and now we have time to alter this, to change, whereas we have no time after death. Lent is a time, during which, we should change our lives and get rid of our imperfections, and how can we change, how can we know our imperfections and faults unless we search for them? The gardener will not find the weeds unless he seeks for them, and he will not take them out unless he finds them; yet they may be there, and growing up may choke the flowers. So too we have many faults and we do not know them, we do not see them, because we are ignorant of our own hearts. This examination, requires a great deal of earnestness and determination, which will keep us from shirking the matter or making it in a perfunctory way. We must not be content with a superficial view of our exterior conduct, but we must explore every cranny of our inmost souls, and the mainsprings of our hearts. If we take the lamp of the Gospel in our hands, and search our souls, and examine the motives of our actions, the desires and the wishes that run through all our thoughts, and that cause us to act; we will find many things imperfect, many which are doubtful, many which are utterly sinful. Self-love which is deeply rooted in our souls plays a great part in our lives. Resentment very often colours the motives of our actions towards others. Pride quickly

blinds us to our own faults, and makes ever ready to see the slight imperfections of our fellows. Sometimes we have a wrong reason, or what we may call a wrong basis for our conduct. Let us try to understand what a perfect Christian is and see how far we resemble him. Let us compare ourselves to one who is patient amidst contradictions; who is kind to the ungrateful; who harbours no resentment against enemies, who suffers pain as though he felt it not; who is pure amid corruption, who is not cast down by blame, nor elated by praise. Compare yourself to him who is never weary of the cross; who is charitable, amidst injustice, who is honest, truthful, humble, resigned to God's will, and lives like a stranger in this world: compare yourself to such a one, and try to live such a life but for one day, and you will see your own faults, your misery and your nothingness, and if you are sincere you will cry out with the publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner." One day we will stand at the Judgment Seat of God to receive our sentence, and at that moment our conscience, will show us even our most trivial faults, and in vivid colours we shall see ourselves painted as we really are. Self-love will not deceive us then, the flattery of friends will not ease our fears, pride will not blind us, nor make us think we are better than others. Ah, no, then we shall see ourselves as we really are, with many faults and imperfec-

tions. We should then go now in spirit into the presence of our Eternal Judge, and search our own souls, and try to gain a true and exact knowledge of our hearts, a knowledge such as our Angel Guardian would give us; and whatever we find in them vitiated, sinful, or wrong, we should cast away from us for ever; and in their place plant the new and beautiful virtues, which should grow in the Christian heart, and produce the true holiness that should be found in the Christian's life. Words cannot tell how important, how necessary, nor how useful, is this true knowledge of our hearts.

Conclusion.—And now brethren, remember, that prayer, fasting, and alms deeds are the principal exercises which Lent brings with it. If too weak to fast do not dispense yourself, but let your priest commute it to some other good work. Reduce your expenses as much as you can, so that you may give greater alms. And enter not into the ballroom, nor theatre during this holy season. Curtail your amusements at home so that you may have more time for prayer. Shun all that will distract or dissipate your mind, and putting aside the world as much as you can, read good books, meditate upon what they say, and this will make you more recollected, and furnish your mind with food for prayer. Be seldom seen in your neighbour's house gossiping, but be often in Church to commune with Our Lord in the Tabernacle. Hear Holy Mass as often as you can,

attend the evening services, and hear as many sermons as possible. Forget not to try and gain a true knowledge of yourself, and to root out the faults that are in your character. All this will tend to, will help you, and will dispose you to make a good earnest Confession, and to change your lives, to make you men and women of prayer, of humility, of mortification. Then truly Lent will have been for you a holy time, an "acceptable time," "the day of Salvation."

CHILDREN OF THE EVIL ONE.

SYNOPSIS.

Children of the Evil One.

"*And if I shall say that I know him not, I shall be like to you a liar.*"—St. John viii. 55.

Introduction . . The habit of lying very Common

The Evil Nature of a Lie
1. It is a Sin against Truth.
2. It is often a Sin against Charity and Justice.
3. It is a Sin against the Eighth Commandment.

The Various Species of Lies
4. White lies.
5. Malicious lies.
6. Workmen's lies.
7. Tradesmen's lies.

How Severely God Punishes The Liar
8. The punishment of Giezi.
9. The punishment of Ananias and Saphira.

Conclusion . . Malicious lies cause fearful evils—Children of the evil one cannot enter Heaven.

CHILDREN OF THE EVIL ONE.

(PASSION SUNDAY).

"And if I shall say that I know him not, I shall be like to you a liar"—St. John viii. 55.

INTRODUCTION.

The habit of lying very common.—One of the many things, brethren, which Our Lord continually hurled against the Pharisees, was the fact, that they were such awful liars. Continually, they contradicted the truths which He preached, and in every way that malice could suggest, they tried to entrap Him in His speech. In the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel, we find them disputing with Him, trying to blacken Him in the eyes of the people, by asserting that He was a Samaritan and had a devil; but Christ easily confutes them, justifies His doctrines, and then says: "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and he stood not in the truth; because the truth is not in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father thereof." (St. John viii. 44). Terrible beyond doubt is this denunciation. It proves to us, that the devil "is a liar and the father of lies," and that those who

imitate him in this are his children. It shows us that deceit is but the parent and cause of lying, for men only tell lies because they want to deceive others. Hence it is, that, we rarely find this vice in any man or woman, without at the same time finding it accompanied by another vice even greater than itself. Yet what is more common amongst people of the world than the habit of telling lies, what is less thought of than this? So little indeed do men deem a lie sinful, that you will actually hear them defend the practice of telling it, and they declare that there is no harm in telling what they call "a little lie." But surely such men have never studied the evil nature of a lie, nor the severity with which God punishes this sin, or they would know that their belief was entirely wrong.

THE EVIL NATURE OF A LIE.

1. It is a sin against Truth.—Philosophy teaches that whatever good qualities we find in creatures, we find in the Creator in an infinite degree, and that it is from God, the source of all goodness, that creatures have derived these qualities. Now if there is one thing more than another which sensible people commend in us, it is the habit of truthfulness. They praise and trust the man or woman who is truthful, whilst they hate and detest a liar. If then truthfulness be good in a creature, how grand and beautiful must it be in

God our Creator? But religion goes much further, and it tells us that God is essentially a God of Truth, that He is Truth Itself, and that falsehood and deceit are entirely opposed to the Divine Nature, that God cannot deceive nor be deceived. The Sacred Scriptures continually point this out. In the very chapter of St. John (chap. viii.), from whence this morning's Gospel is taken, we hear Our Lord distinctly stating that His Eternal Father is Truth; that what He teaches He has heard from His Father, and that on this account, the Pharisees and others ought to believe Him (ver. 26).

And again, God is not only Truth Itself, but He would have His children truthful, and He has emphatically told us to be so, in our intercourse one with another. Thus has He established a rule or order, of truthfulness, which ought to influence not only our words, but even our thoughts and actions towards our fellow man, so that nothing in our conduct towards him should be deceitful. "You shall not lie, "says God," neither shall any man deceive his neighbour" (Lev. xix. 11). Again: "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord" (Prov. xii. 22). Still more pointed are the Psalmist's words: "Thou has hated all that do evil: thou wilt destroy all them that speak lies" (Psalm v. 7). There is then an order of truth which should rule us in all our conduct towards others, and this order or rule the children of God should love, and

be careful never, even in the smallest matter, to offend against it. Christ told the Pharisees, that the devil was a liar, and the father of lies, and that they on account of their deceit and lies, were children of the evil one, and that they did his work (St. John viii. 44). The same may be said of the Pharisee, the liar of our time. They indeed are children of the evil one, they are full of deceit, and their numerous falsehoods, cause others to quarrel, to hate and injure each other, and thus they do the devil's work, thus they carry out their father's desires. From all this we have seen then, the evil nature of a lie, it is evil because it is opposed to the very Nature of God, Who is Truth Itself; it is evil because it offends against and breaks that rule of truthfulness, which God commands, should exist amongst His creatures whilst on earth.

2. It is often a sin against charity and justice.—But if every lie be evil in itself, and therefore sinful, still more sinful are those malicious lies which are told to do others harm. There are many who on account of malice, hesitate not to say or insinuate evil things, which they know or suspect to be false, against their neighbour, and thus caluminate him, and there are multitudes who are ever ready to slander him. Slander or detraction consists in saying or revealing anything which will hurt our neighbour's character. It differs from calumny, because in calumny we accuse our neigh-

bour wrongfully, and charge him with a crime of which he never was guilty; but by detraction we reveal or publish to others, such crimes or faults as he has actually committed in private, the revealing of which cannot but be a prejudice his character. It is no excuse to say that what we have revealed is true, for though it is true we have no right to reveal it, except when it would lead to our neighbours conversion, or would avert a public calamity; otherwise it is a sin, and prehaps a grevious sin, and offends against charity and justice. The law of Charity requires, that we should treat our neighbour as we would wish him to treat us. Now would we be pleased with him, if he went about publishing and revealing our faults, our most secret sins, and exposing us to the censure of the public? Certainly not, and we would soon cry out against him. Why then should we not act towards him, as we would wish him to act towards us? Does not the law of nature written in our hearts urge us to do unto others, as we would have them do unto us? Does not God also say: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?" Detraction is again a sin against justice. A man's character is as much his property as anything else he may be possessed of; nay it is by far his most valuable possession, for a good name is valued more, by persons of principle, than all the wealth of the world. If then by our detraction, we take away any part of our neighbour's character,

we strip him of the richest thing he has. How many of us would scorn to rob our neighbour of his worldly substance, yet by our detraction we hesitate not to rob him of that which is more precious. Our neighbour, with many of us, is eternally the subject of our discourse; the moment we hear of his fault, or learn anything to his discredit, we cannot rest, we must go and disclose the deadly secret to the first friend we meet. But is it a sin to repeat what one has heard to the prejudice of their neighbour? Yes, for in the first place general reports are commonly found to be false upon examination, and surely it is never lawful to do real and certain injury upon uncertain reports; and secondly, if the imputation were well grounded yet if the sin is private, you are bound in conscience and in charity to your fellow man, not to speak of it. Thus St. Paul tells us, that not only detractors, but likewise those who consent to the detraction shall never enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

3. It is a sin against the Eighth Commandment. — So much does God value this great attribute of truthfulness in His creatures, that, in the Eighth Commandment He has absolutely forbidden us to bear false witness against our neighbour, or to injure him by lying, calumny, detraction, backbiting, or speech or writing, in short, in any way whatsoever. It is remarkable that this Commandment which prohibits our bearing false witness

against our neighbour, should follow that which prohibits us from stealing our neighbours goods; the one Commandment seems but a continuation of the other, and it is for this reason, because the sins prohibited by both Commandments are so much alike. In one we are forbidden to steal his worldly substance such as his goods or money, and in the other we are forbidden to steal his personal character, which is his property, and which is even more precious than wealth to him. With a good character he may regain wealth, but without it he very rarely can. The law then of restitution holds good in both cases. If we steal our neighbours money we are bound to restore it, if we steal his character we are also bound to restitution. Detraction then is a henious sin which requires restitution. As an act of injustice it requires a reparation, either by retracting publicly what you said if your aspersion was false, or by commending him in other respects if the aspersion was true. And if your neighbour has suffered in his business or profession, you are bound in conscience to make restitution for the losses he has sustained. How difficult is it to do this. It is very easy to detract, but a most difficult thing to make reparation. The lie or story you told to one, he soon tells to another; that person tells it to a third, a third to a fourth and so on, in each case it is most likely told with additions. And so it goes from one to another, till it spreads

through the whole town, and then it spreads from the town to the country. It resembles the little snowflakes that by continually and often falling, soon cover the whole ground. It is like a little spark which in a short time causes a large fire. But still even though this be so, you must make restitution, you must by every effort in your power make restitution for if you prayed and fasted a hundred years and did not do so the sin will never be forgiven. Surely this alone should keep us from the sin of detraction. It is a fearful vice and what is still worse is, that, people seem generally to take no account of it, to think it is their business to detract, yet nothing can make them more hateful to God.

THE VARIOUS SPECIES OF LIES.

4. White lies.—It would be almost impossible to enumerate every kind of lie, since we must remember that lies can be acted as well as spoken. This we have verified in the conduct of the Pharisees. To tell a lie, is to say what we know or believe to be untrue, with the intention to deceive, for where there is no deception there is no sin White lies, or what some call little untruths are certainly sinful, for God has said: "you shall not lie, neither shall any man deceive his neighbour" (Lev. xix. 22). Now there are some men and women, who can scarcely speak without lying.

Even in the most ordinary conversations, they grossly exaggerate the truth, they tell lies about their past, about their doings and sayings, and they are always careful to flatter themselves and to make themselves appear to others, better and greater than they really are. Surely there is deceit here and therefore sin. Such liars are hateful to God Who is Truth and cannot bear a liar. To lie in excuse shows guilt and cowardice; to lie in order to deceive others and make them believe we are that which we are not, argues of a proud spirit. Both are a design to delude others with a a false representation of things, and to take advantage to ourselves by the deceit. Now however artificially we may carry out this practice for a while, in the end it is always discovered; and we can hardly imagine the contempt people have for us in consequence. Nay, the more clever we have been in deceiving others, the more severely will they censure us when we are found out. From that moment we lose all trust, all credit in society; for all men avoid a liar as a common enemy, and even truth in his mouth loses its dignity, for he is always suspected, and often disbelieved. If then unluckily we offend in any way, let us not cover it up with a lie, for this last fault doubles the former, and each lie makes the other more inexcusable. But let us modestly confess our fault and it will be readily forgiven, and this very confession of a small offence, will establish the

opinion that we are innocent of greater ones. Neither let us foist ourselves up on a pinnacle of greatness, and try by our lies to make men think we are greater than we really are, for men will soon see through our veil of pride, soon detect our deceit, and end by despising us and treating our word with contempt. Such contempt will surely show us, that the habit of telling what we term white lies or little untruths, is hateful in the sight of men, much less in the sight of God, Who will punish us most severly for them.

5. Malicious lies.—A malicious lie, is that which is spoken to the prejudice of others. Such lies often cause the greatest disorders and the commission of the most horrible crimes. For what is more common than the fact, that one man seeks to be revenged upon another, because some calumninator has told him, that that other has injured him in some way. Very frequently do we see this in the world's history, a malicious lie has been the cause even of the most fearful murders. In this mornings Gospel, we see with what malice, obstinacy, and fury, the Pharisees, the children of evil, persecuted Christ Himself. When the people were struck with admiration at the miracles which Our Lord wrought, the Pharisees were filled with fury and indignation, and did their utmost to blacken His reputation, and to prevent any glory that might result from these miracles, they gave out that Our

Lord had a devil, that He derived His power from the prince of devils, Belzebub. And though Christ confuted them and showed men their wickedness, yet in the end we know, that their malicious lies and assertions stirred up the chief priests and others, and brought about the terrible and awful Crucifixion of Our Lord on Mount Calvary. Our lies may not go so far indeed, we do not attack the Very Person of Christ, but we attack His brethren when we censure them unjustly, or make them the subjects of detraction and slander. Here we have a lie evil in itself, but accompanied by the hideous vices of anger, hatred, and revenge, which vices prompt us to tell it.

6. Workmen's lies.—It may astonish some to mention workmen's lies, but let us not forget, that lies may be acted as well as spoken. Workmen and labourers as a rule agree with their master, to perform a certain amount of work for a certain wage. Whilst the master is present the work goes on as it ought, in fact, some workmen seem then to work a great deal harder than required. But the moment the master turns aside the work is neglected, done without care, often stopped altogether, yet such workmen insist on full payment. We cannot but see here, that such men are deceiving their employers by such conduct, they are therefore acting the lie, and the lie in this case is accompanied by the vice of dishonesty, for let them understand,

that all the wage they receive over and above the just value of the work they performed, is so much stolen money, for which restitution must be made. Workmen also should be careful as to how they use the implements and material with which their master supplies them, lest by their carelessness, a good part of them are lost and wasted.

7. Tradesmen's lies.—Tradesmen are another class who often make profit through a habit of lying. A young inexperienced person goes into their shops for some of the goods they sell, and at once the tradesman notices the ignorance of the buyer, trades on it, asks far more than the value or accustomed price, and sometimes even foists upon the customer, inferior and damaged goods. Such men will tell you that they must lie to live, but this is untrue, since no customer will refuse them a fair and legitimate profit, upon which they can live comfortably. They may term, as they do, such conduct business, but it is a sorry business, it is an injustice for which restitution must be made, or the justice of God will never allow them to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Many mix their goods, many adulterate their wares and sell them as pure unmixed goods; some even use false weights, or find a way of giving short measure, but let them understand that all this is a cheat upon the public, it is a sin of dishonesty, they may deceive and cheat their customers but they cannot cheat God.

HOW SEVERELY GOD PUNISHES THE LIAR.

8. The punishment of Giezi.—Such then are some of the many species of lies, but in order to know thoroughly, how detestable the habit of lying is in the sight of God, let us glance at the manner in which He punishes the liar. We read in the fifth chapter of the Fourth Book of Kings, that Naaman a Syrian general, afflicted with leprosy, came to the Prophet Eliseus, and asked to be healed of disease. The Prophet ordered him to wash seven times in the Jordan, and when he had done so his flesh regained health and he was cured. Grateful for this blessing Naaman returned to Eliseus and would have loaded him with presents but the holy man refused them and said; "Go in peace." But the Prophet had a servant named Giezi, and he being covetous, waited till Naaman had gone a little distance, and then ran after him and told the Syrian, that his master had sent him for a talent of silver and two changes of garments. Naaman gladly gave even more than this to Giezi, and the latter hid them in his master's house. When he returned to the Prophet, Eliseus asked: "Whence comest thou, Giezi"? The servant answered that he had not been anywhere. Then the Prophet said: "Was not my heart present, when the man turned back from his chariot to meet thee? So now thou hast received money to buy oliveyards and vine-

yards, and sheep and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants. But the leprosy of Naaman shall also stick to thee, and to thy seed for ever" (iv. Kings, v. 25-27). And the servant departed from him, white as snow with leprosy. Behold then the punishment of Giezi, who was not only a liar, but was covetous, for he wished for the Syrian's goods, and beyond this he was dishonest, for Naaman gave the presents expecting them to be carried to Eliseus, but Giezi lied and kept them. Thus we see that the vice of lying was here accompanied by the vices of greed and dishonesty.

9. The punishment of Ananias and Saphira.—St. Luke tells us in the Acts of the Apostles, that the new Christian converts had but one heart and one soul, and that they did not call what they posessed their own, but had all things in common, and everyone's necessities were supplied out of the common stock. Many indeed who had houses and lands sold them, and through the hands of the Apostles, placed the money thus gained in the common fund (Chap. iv. ver. 32-34). Amongst such persons was the man Ananias, and Saphira his wife. They sold a piece of land, but instead of bringing all to the Apostles, they kept back part of the money and bringing the rest laid it at the feet of the Apostles. Then St. Peter said to the man: "Ananias, why hath Satan tempted thy heart that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost, and by fraud

keep back part of the price of the land? Whilst it remained, did it not remain to thee, and after it was sold was it not in thy power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied to men but to God." Ananias on hearing these words fell dead at the Apostle's feet, and he was carried out and buried. Saphira coming in about three hours after was questioned by St. Peter, and she lied as her husband had done and Peter said to her: "Why have you agreed to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold the feet of them that have buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out." The woman then fell dead also and they buried her with her husband; and there came a great fear upon all who heard these things (Acts. v. 1-11). How swift and sudden was the punishment of these two, who in lying to the Apostle were at the same time lying to the Holy Ghost. They sinned against and tempted the Spirit of the Lord, and were punished at that very moment. If such a fate awaited us when we lie, how careful we would be never to lie again. And what, because our punishment is put off till the end of life, is that any reason why we should continue in this evil habit? No, indeed for the end of life may come soon when we are still pursuing our sinful way, and then we must give a most strict and rigorous account of every word we have uttered.

Conclusion.—Brethren for the love of Heaven,

examine your souls most minutely and see how you stand before God in this matter. Avoid all lies even in the smallest matter, but above all avoid malicious lies, backbiting, slander and detraction. True there are other grave sins committed by men, but few if any, which cause so much evil, so much anger, hatred, quarrels, murders and other fearful crimes as the habit of detraction and lying. It was by lying that the devil first deceived, and then overcame our parents in Eden and thus brought sin with all its miseries into this world. It is by lies, especially malicious lies, that the devil's children continue and conduct his work. We have the words of Our Lord to prove this, remember what He said to those liars and deceivers the Pharisees. And think how every lie may add to that heavy burden, that heavy debt of restitution we must make, and which must be made before our sins will be forgiven. Be careful lest one day you merit the reproach of Christ: "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you will do. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father thereof." A child of the devil, brethren, cannot enter Heaven, but will be hurled into hell. Be not liars then any longer.

THE RE-UNION OF CHRISTENDOM.

SYNOPSIS.

The Re-union Of Christendom.

"And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."—St. John x. 16.

Introduction . . The Evils of Division

The Absolute Unity of Christ's Church
1. The similarity of Christ's time and our own.
2. Christ came to produce religious unity.
3. Christ's commission to His Apostles forbids division.
4. Christ's prayer for unity in His Church.
5. Other proofs of the Church's unity. Christ's promise: The Holy Spirit's work in the Church.

The Jews rise against Christ: The Sects Unite against Christ's Church
6. The Jews rise up against Christ.
7. The sects unite against Christ's Church.

Papal Infallibility maintains the Church's Unity
8. Peter infallible as the foundation of Christ's Church.
9. Peter made infallible through Christ's prayer.
10. Peter infallible as Supreme Pastor of Christ's Church.
11. Peter's prerogatives descend to his successors, the Popes of Rome.
12. What Papal Infallibility means.

Conclusion . . Duties of Catholics and non-Catholics concerning Re-union.

THE RE-UNION OF CHRISTENDOM.

(SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.)

"And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, aud they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd"—St. John x. 16.

INTRODUCTION.

The evils of division.—Many, brethren, are the religious questions of the day, but if there is one amongst them more prominent than another, one which has engaged, and is engaging, the mind of the world at the present hour, it is that of the re-union of Christendom. When we consider the awful consequences which division causes, the many souls that are lost, through the division of religion into the many so-called creeds or sects, we cannot fail to see the importance of this matter. Re-union means the salvation of many souls, separation means their eternal loss. Need we then be surprised that Leo xiii., has asked us to pray fervently and continually, that God would deign to move the hearts of men and cause them to put away all religion differences, that He would cause all the sheep of Christ to hear Christ's voice, so that there may be once more, "one fold and one shepherd.

In order that you may thoroughly understand this matter, and know your duty regarding it, let us now charitably consider it.

THE ABSOLUTE UNITY OF CHRIST'S CHURCH.

1. The similarity of Christ's time and our own.—There was a wonderful similarity between the state of the Jews in the time of Christ, and that of Protestants at the present day. For the Jews indeed had their sects, such as the Pharisees, the Saducees, Samaritans, Esseni and others, each of them avowing that they, and they only, held truly the Jewish religion. One taught this and another that, one reviled and condemned what the other believed and held sacred, one esteemed as folly what the other looked upon as Heavenly wisdom. Precisely so has it ever been with Protestantism, since the hour its children rebelled against, and left the bosom of the Catholic Church. Its principle of private interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures, has produced amongst its children a confusion and tumult, similar to that which took place at the tower of Babel. And thus we find Protestantism to-day split up into many creeds and sects, each contradicting and conflicting with the other. And if the public press ever bore witness to anything it is to this, that there is a great confusion amongst the sects at the present hour.

2. Christ came to produce religious unity.—

It was under similar circumstances, that Christ came into the world. The Jews were divided in their religious belief, and the Scriptures were the foundation of that division. But Christ came to unite all men in brotherly love and banish all religious rancour, to found His Church, and preach His Gospel, which was to spread to the uttermost bounds of the earth, to be unchangeable, and last for ever. There was to be no division, no sects in His Church. True He had other sheep which were not of the fold, but them He would bring, they would hear His voice and there was to be "one fold and one Shepherd." Though He called Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian, and every nation, and tribe, and people, to enter His Church, there was to be no want of harmony, no discord, no division, but it was to be as the Apostle tells us, "one body, one spirit," having "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephes. iv. 4-5). Thus although there had been divisions before, yet Christ came into the world to preach His Gospel, to do away with division and produce unity. So that as St. Paul says: "By breaking down the wall of partition between us (that is the Jews) He might reconcile us to God, in one body."

3. Christ's commission to his Apostles forbids division.—There is nothing more characteristic of Christ's teaching than this. No feature of His Church stands out more boldly, than this note,

this mark of unity. Look at the commission He gave to His Apostles. These were men whom He had chosen from amongst all others, and He took great care to make known the whole of His doctrines to them; for He said: "I have called you friends: because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you" (St. John xv. 15). Then just as His Father had sent Him to preach the Gospel, so He sends forth His Apostles, giving them the same work, and the same mission. "As the Father hath sent Me I also send you (St. John xx. 21). All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20). "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (St. Mark xvi. 16). "He that heareth you heareth Me; and he despiseth you despiseth Me: and he that despiseth Me, despiseth him that sent Me" (St. Luke x. 16). Many consequences flow from this commission but we will only mention a few. First of all, the Apostles were sent to preach the Gospel to every nation and to every creature, and they were not to teach or preach, doctrines formed or conceived by themselves, but they were

expressly commanded, to teach "all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them. Their doctrines were therefore His and not their own, and therefore Christ said most truly: "He that heareth you heareth Me." Fancy if you can for a moment, the Apostles after they received their mission, going forth to preach different dogmas; fancy, Peter teaching that there were seven Sacraments, and John asserting that there were only two. Picture James teaching men that there is a Purgatory, and the other Apostles denying its existence. Fancy Peter, James and John acting like Luther, Calvin and others, each founding a different sect bearing his name, and preaching his doctrine. No, the picture is too absurd, too incongruous, it is against all reason and common sense. They taught, not their own whims and fancies, but all "things whatsoever" which their Divine Master had commanded them. As then these doctrines were from the Eternal Father (St. John xx.), and made known to the Apostles by Christ, so the dogmas they preached were God's, and the Apostles were but His mouthpieces, He spoke to the world through them. A second and a still more forcible consequence for us, flows also from the commission given to His chosen ones by Christ. Since God the Creator had directly sent them, every creature without exception was bound to listen to them, and bound not only to listen to them, but also to accept the tenets and doc-

trines which they delivered with the authority of, and for, their Lord and Master. As the Father had sent Christ, so Christ sent them, and therefore men were equally bound to accept the doctrines they preached, just as fully and freely as if Christ were present preaching Himself. Wherefore he only that believed and was baptised, he only that accepted these doctrines and by baptism professed them and lived up to them: he only would be saved. They who believed not as Our Lord says, shall be condemned. This is indeed a conclusion which should teach many a severe lesson. For in our days many have very strange and erroneous ideas, of the true nature of Christ's Church. A Church is now, and has been in the past, supposed by many to be, a collection of individuals who happen to agree about the meaning of some texts of Scripture, and follow a leader or founder, whose name the Church often bears. The reformers and others differed about the meaning of certain texts in the Bible. Luther said it meant one thing, Calvin said no, it means quite another, but Zuingle said you are both wrong, and I have the right meaning. Thus we have the folly and pride of men, actually dictating to God what they will believe and what they will not believe. But as our reason tells us, it is God's right to dictate to His creatures the doctrines which He wishes them to believe and profess. And we see fully from Christ's words to His Apostles, that all men were bound

under penalty of condemnation, to accept each and every doctrine which these Apostles preached to them, there was to be no picking or choosing. Thus, the commision itself strictly forbids division. The Apostles were to preach one Gospel, containing all things whatsoever which Christ had taught them, and men were bound to believe and profess it full and entire under pain of damnation. Hence neither in the Apostle's teaching, nor in the people listening, does this commission of Christ allow division, but on the contrary it is absolutely opposed to it, and in every way promotes and upholds unity.

4. Christ's prayer for unity in His Church.—But Christ did more than this to preserve unity in His Church. Beside this commission to His Apostles we have His prayer to His Eternal Father, that His Church might ever be one. "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst, keep them from evil. They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Thy word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me. That they all may be one, as Thou Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us" (St. John xvii. 15, 16, 18, 20, 21). Christ about to leave the world, prays here, not

alone, that there may ever be the same unity amongst His Apostles after His Ascension, as there was when He was present with them, but that there also may exist for all time, the same kind of unity between the children of His Church, that exists between Him and His father. Now Christ being God, His prayer must be granted. For Christ never prayed for a thing, that God did not desire and will, and God's holy will must be accomplished. Here then was the nature of the Church's unity, the same kind of unity as that of the Godhead. Unity of faith, unity of profession, unity of practice, unity of Sacraments and obedience to the Church's pastors. Could there be the very shadow of discord or want of harmony in the Godhead of the Three Divine Persons? It would be utter blasphemy to assert this, and neither therefore can there be any want of unity in Christ's Church. Christ prays that the teachers of His Church may be sanctified in truth, and He states that the word of His Father which He has ordered them to preach is truth. But truth is one, truth is not opposed to itself, truth cannot mean this in one sect or creed, and another thing entirely in a second. How unreasonable then is the theory which some hold, that all religions are equally good. We see daily before us the clearest possible evidence of the sects opposing each other, contradicting each other, yet some state foolishly that they are all good, all equally safe. This cannot

be, for since truth cannot contradict itself whereas they do, they convincingly prove that they have not the word of God, which we learn from Christ's prayer, is truth. "Thy word is truth." No, indeed, they are not all equally safe, nor one as good as another, neither can they be as some would have it, parts of Christ's Church, for they are opposed to each other in essentials and fundamentals, and there can never be, we repeat, any want of unity, in the Church of Christ. It must ever be, "one body, one spirit, having one faith, one baptism."

5. Other proofs of the Church's Unity. Christ's promise: Teaching of the Holy Spirit. —When Our Lord was surrounded by His Apostles on Mount Olivet just before His Ascenion, He gave them His command to go and preach to the whole world, and He added: "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." " (St. Matt. xxviii. 20). Christ here promises to be with His Apostles, that He may assist them effectually in the execution of their great work, not for three or four hundred years, but for all time, till "the consummation of the world." How then we ask could Christ's Church lose its unity, how could it be divided, in and against itself, when Christ ever remains with, not only the Apostles, but their successors, "all days" till the end of time? "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," says Christ (St. John xiv. 6), and how could He, Who is

truth ever allow dissensions or contradictions in His Church? St. Matthew relates (chap. viii. 23-27), that on one occasion Our Lord entered into a boat, and His disciples followed Him. Then a great tempest arose and the boat was covered with waves but Christ was asleep. And the disciples awoke Him saying: "Lord save us, we perish." But He rising up commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm. So that men wondered and said: "What manner of man is this, for the winds and the sea obey Him?" Christ was then with His Apostles, and when they called Him, He puts aside the danger, and causes a great calm. So is He in His Church, Peter's ship, watching with an especial care over it. He is not indeed physically present as He was of old, yet when men trouble His Church, when the powers of hell try to overthrow her, He rises up, and His Almighty Hand sustains her. "Hold," He says, "to the Church's enemies, "I am here, I protect my Church founded on Peter, and I will not allow you to harm her, I will protect her all days, till the end of the world."

The promise of Christ made to His Apostles concerning the Paraclete, was fulfilled when the Holy Ghost came down upon the disciples in tongues of fire (Acts ii. 1-11). "I will ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever" (St. John xiv. 16). Here we have the promise of Our Lord as to the coming of

the Holy Ghost, but we must seek in another chapter of St. John, for a description of the work the Paraclete would perform. "These things have I spoken abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you (St. John xiv. 25-26). When Christ was with His Apostles, He could decide any little doubts about the doctrine they had to preach, and now that He was about to leave them, He would ask His Father to give them another Paraclete, one to take His place, and this Comforter would stop with them for ever, and bring to their minds all things that Christ had said to them. Creation was more especially the work of God the Father, and Redemption the work of the Son, so Illumination and Sanctification are especially the work of God the Holy Ghost. He is the Spirit of Truth, the Enlightener and Sanctifier. Christ in His discourse to the Apostles, points out the office of the Holy Ghost in the Church. "He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you (St. John. xiv. 26). The Paraclete was not only then sent by the Eternal Father to comfort the Apostles, but He came also to illumine their minds, to teach them all things. The Holy Spirit then enlightens and teaches in the Church, and so He has become the

Soul of Christ's Church. He has united the Apostles and disciples and has made them one. We have evidences of this, when on that first Whit Sunday He descended upon the diciples, who were before this afraid of the Jews. He came in the shape of "parted tongues as it were of fire," fit emblems of the work He would enable the Apostles to perform. They now cast fear aside, and bravely go forth "endued with power from on high," and "filled with the Holy Ghost, began to speak with divers tongues, as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak" (Acts. ii. 4). Peter who had formerly denied his Divine Master, now preaches openly and, "about three thousand," were converted on that day (Acts. ii. 41). The new converts ask Peter what they must do, and he orders them to do penance, be baptized, and then they too will receive the Holy Ghost (Acts. ii. 38). Daily then the Church increased its members (verse. 47), and others looked on with fear and wonder. Miracles followed (chap. iii), some of the Apostles are apprehended, but still the Church increased. Thus does the Holy Spirit work in the Church, illuminating and fortifying its pastors, making the Church one, as He is by nature one by Himself. These plain truths destroy what some have put forward as the branch theory. These people assert, that it does not matter much what the various sects and so-called churches teach, because they are only diffierent branches of the trunk or

parent Church, the Church of Christ. A slight examination will show, that these churches and sects are entirely opposed to each other, were it not so there would be no reason for the existence of many of them. Now from the Sacred Scriptures we see that Our Lord promised to ask His Father, to send the Apostles another Paraclete, to abide with them for ever. On Whit Sunday we see this promise fulfilled, and we behold the work of the Holy Ghost shown in the actions of the apostles, for He illuminates them, He endows them with fortitude, and they go forth to do what Christ told them. Our Lord will distinctly tell us, Who and What the Holy Ghost is. "But when the Paraclete cometh, Whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me" (St. John. xv. 26). Again Christ says: "But when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will teach you all truth" (St. John. xvi. 13). Our Lord then here declares that the Holy Ghost is the "Spirit of Truth." If we ponder a moment we shall see, that this Holy Spirit is so called, because He is the substantial lover of truth, and leads men to love it, and He is thus opposed to the false Spirit of the world. He came also to announce truth. "He will teach you all truth." Can any sane impartial man then, conceive this Spirit of Truth, teaching or causing others to disseminate religious doctrines diametri-

cally opposed to each other? Could He tell the members of one Church that faith only was necessary for Salvation, and the members of another that good works were also required. Could He cause one sect to deny the necessity of Confession, and cause another Church to affirm it? Could He teach in one Church that there were seven Sacraments, and in another that there were only two? Most certainly not, He is the Soul of Christ's Church, teaching it all truth, and He cannot contradict Himself. The branch theory then is utterly false, for these so termed branches have no connection with the parent trunk, with the true Church of Christ, for the fruit it bears is truth, whilst they produce little else than falsehood. The Spirit of Truth could not teach all these contradictory and opposite doctrines, could not teach truth and falsehood, hence these so-called churches, these sects, have not the truth. Every being must operate according to its essence, must act according to its nature, it cannot do otherwise; and the Holy Spirit being essentially truthful, being by nature Truth Itself, He cannot deceive nor put forth false doctrines, nor aid in teaching lies. This would be opposed to the very nature, the very essence of God Himself.

THE JEWS RISE AGAINST CHRIST: THE SECTS UNITE AGAINST HIS CHURCH.

6. The Jewish sects rise up against Christ

—When Christ began to preach, to found His Church, the Jewish sects rose up against Him. Are we not surprised at this, seeing they were such diligent readers of the Old Testament from which they professed to take their tenets? Surely that Testament should have prepared them for His coming. Did not the Prophets continually speak about the future Messiah? Had not, Isias and Jeremias given an outline of His future life? Did not Micheas mention His birth place, and Daniel the time when He would appear? All this they no doubt read but it seemed in vain. And Christ during His public ministry, gave them every proof of His Divinity, by His many wondrous miracles wrought throughout their native land, and some before their very eyes, yet these sects divided in themselves, were united in one thing, namely, their opposition to Our Lord. How often did the Pharisees and Sadducees unite and try to entrap Him in His speech and thus confound Him. They abused and reviled Him in every way, they said He was a Samaritan, and had a devil. When they could not get over His miracles and were forced to admit them, they declared that He was in league with Beelzebub and worked them through him. Because some believed in Him they were furious. Then Caiphas said that one should die for the nation. It was well known who that one was, for from that moment they sought an opportunity to arrest Him.

At last they took Him and condemned Him to a most awful and shameful death. When Pilate would have released Him, the Chief priests stirred up the people who cried out: "Crucify Him, Crucify Him." But when Christ rose again from the dead His followers flocked around Him. For forty days He remained with them, and over five hundred of them saw Him. When the Paraclete Whom He promised had come, the Apostles went forth to preach the Gospel as Christ had ordered them. Nation after nation, people after people entered the Church, and for fifteen centuries there was practically "one fold and one Shepherd." But now came Luther, the founder of Protestantism, which to-day is split up into numerous sects, and cannot therefore be the Church for which Christ prayed, the Church which was to be one as He and the Father are one.

7. The sects unite against Christ's Church.—History is said to repeat itself, and the state of the religious world in Our Lord's time finds a parallel in our own day. Many and various are the religious sects, and Christ in the person of His Vicar once more calls upon men to put aside their religious differences, to break down the wall that divides them, so that there may be once more, "one fold" and, "one shepherd." But what are the results? Some indeed see re-union in the near future, but with a great many the cry is: "away with the Pope of Rome. We will not have this man reign over

us." The sects divided amongst themselves, are united in opposing the Pope. Christ was called a Samaritan, the Holy Father is called the Antichrist.

Why we ask is this? The Jews rejected Christ because He made Himself as He truly was, the Son of God and their Master, and the sects reject the Pope, because he claims to be the Supreme Ruler of Christ's Church on earth, and to be infallible. Consequently Re-union means for them absorption into his Church, a return to that fold which they left centuries ago, and this they cannot bear. They appeal to the Scriptures, they contend that they contain no mention of an infallible ruler, nay many deny infallibility altogether. How can any man be infallible they ask? We answer that man can be infallible if God make him so. What do the Scriptures say? In the old Testamemt the Jews could, and did, find many prophecies concerning Christ, and in the New Testament we shall find accounts, showing us the Pope's Supremacy and Infallibility if we search for them; and it is strange that those who read their Bible, who boast of the "Bible and the Bible only" do not also see them.

PAPAL INFALLIBITY MAINTAINS THE CHURCH'S UNITY.

8. Peter infallible as the foundation of Christ's Church.—Since the sects appeal to the Sacred Scriptures let us now turn to them and learn what they say about the Pope of Rome. Christ

upon one occasion draws a verbal picture of a wise man, and a foolish one (St. Luke vi. 47-49). They were about to build each of them a house, and the wise man dug deep and laid the foundation of his house upon the rock, and when the floods and streams beat upon that house they could not shake it; for it was founded on a rock. But the foolish man built his house upon the sand or shifting earth, and when the stream beat against it, the house immediately fell and great was the ruin thereof. When Christ then Who is all-wise came to found His Church, which of these two would He imitate? Certainly the wise man, and He would do so that His Church might stand for ever. Therefore we are not surprised when we hear Him say to His Apostle: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven" (St. Matt. xvi. 18-19). Thus does Christ declare to the Apostle the dignity to which He deigned to raise him, namely, that he Peter whose name signified rock, should be a rock indeed, of invincible strength, for the support of the building of the Church, in which building he should be next to Christ Himself, the chief corner stone, by being its chief pastor, and ruler, and governor. He was there-

fore to have all fulness of ecclesiastical power which is signified by the "Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." The word of Christ "upon this rock I will build My Church," spoken in the vulgar language of the Jews which Our Lord made use of, were the same as if He had said in English "Thou art a Rock and upon this Rock I will build my Church." The plain meaning then of the words is, that Peter is here declared to be the rock upon which the Church was to be built. Christ then followed the example of the wise builder (St. Matt. vii. 24-25), and thus made His Church secure against all storms, therefore neither Satan nor his agents can ever overcome it, for the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. Thus we are fully assured by Christ, that, neither idolatry, nor heresy, nor any pernicious error whatsoever, shall at any time prevail against His Church. The Holy Spirit then teaches the Church all truth, Christ as He has promised will be with her for ever, and the gates of hell can never prevail against her. Can such a Church then be fallible? No, indeed it is most unreasonable to say she can after all these testimonies from the Bible. If she were, then all Christ's assertions concerning her would be mere talk, but it would be blasphemy to say this. But if Christ the wise builder, built His Infallible Church on the rock, and the gates of hell cannot overcome it, how can they prevail against the foundation that strengthens it? Does not Christ in His comparison of the two men

(St. Matt vii. 24-25) who built houses, distinctly say that the wise man's house withstood the fury of the tempests, precisely because it was founded on the rock. The foundation supports and upholds the edifice, and if it be weak and unstable how can the Church be lasting? Nay, if one is infallible both are so, and in fact the Church is infallible because the foundation makes it so. Christ knew that storms of heresy, persecution, and other evils would beat upon His Church, and hence He built her not on the shifting sands, but on the immovable rock, because as He said the house upon the rock withstands all storms. Thus we see that the rock, or Peter the foundation of the Church, is himself infallible.

9. Peter made infallible through Christ's prayer.—Again when Christ was seated with his Apostles, just after the Last Supper, He spoke to Peter. "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren" (St. Luke xxii. 31-32). Christ was here discoursing with the whole of the Apostles, and in the word "you" He includes them all, for Satan desired to sift them all; but it was for Peter only that Our Lord prayed. "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not and thou being once converted confirm thy brethren." Notice three things here. Christ's prayer which must be answered. For Christ

was God, and the prayer of a God must and will be answered fully. Secondly, see how this rendered Peter infallible in his faith, and made him strong, and therefore he was told to confirm the other Apostles. Thirdly, notice, that his own faith never failing, he could not teach the other brethren anything wrong in faith or morals.

10. Peter infallible as Supreme Pastor of Christ's Church.—But there yet remains another discourse of Our Lord to Peter which we must glance at. To understand it fully we must remember how often He called Himself a Shepherd, "I am the Good Shepherd." Frequently does He call the Church a fold, and the children who are to enter it His sheep. "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold." After His Resurrection Christ spoke to Peter once more and said: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these?" And Peter answers: "yea Lord Thou knowest that I love Thee." Then Christ says: "Feed my lambs." A second and a third time He asked Peter this question, and the Apostle is troubled and replies: "Lord Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Then Christ said to him: "Feed My sheep." (St. John xxi. 16-17). Christ here gives Peter charge of the lambs and the sheep, of both pastors and people. "Peter," Christ seems to say, I am the Good Shepherd, I am the Universal Pastor over all, I look after both the lambs and the sheep,

but I am going to My Father in Heaven, take thou then My place, and be under Me the chief shepherd of the fold on earth."

11. Peter's prerogatives descend to his Successors, the Popes of Rome.—The Infallibility of Peter is contained in the doctrine of his Supremacy and was always part of it. The words of Christ when they confer the one power, at the same time confer the other. When Peter is made the foundation of the Church, then he is given, "the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." When Christ strengthens his faith, he is "to confirm his brethren." And when he makes his triple act of love, he is to feed the sheep and the lambs, the whole flock. He who has the Keys of a place has complete control over it; he who is to confirm others, must be confirmed himself; he who is to feed the flock must be their shepherd and pastor. These texts of Scripture then prove Peter's Infallibility and Supremacy, and it is strange that those who read their Bibles do not see and understand them. Being the foundation of the Church he has authority over it; being shepherd of the flock all are bound to hear his voice, and since he has to confirm the brethren he must be their teacher. These tasks would have never been entrusted to a weak fallible man, for it would have meant ruin for the Church, against which hell would never prevail, in which the Holy Ghost was

teaching all truth; and with which Christ was to remain till the end of time.

Since then the Church of Christ is infallible, it must exist to-day, and with it we must find Peter with all the prerogatives his Divine Master gave him. This is as certain as the fact that the foundation of a house must remain as long as the house stands, for take the foundation away and the house falls asunder. What a foundation is to a house that a Supreme Ruler, is to any body of men. Now since the Church of Christ, must exist according to Christ's words till the end of time, till all men are converted, it must have all those powers and privileges with which Our Lord endowed it at the beginning. Consequently since Peter has long ago gone to Heaven to receive his reward, we must look for his rightful successors, since they must have received Peter's prerogatives, which are now just as necessary for the work of the Church, as they were of old.

St. Peter as history relates was Bishop first of Antioch, but finally fixed his see at Rome. He was Bishop of Rome for twenty-five years and at length suffered martyrdom A.D. 67. Of these facts we have clear and decisive evidence in the ancient Christian writers, and the "Babylon," from which he wrote his Epistle (1. Peter v. 13), is held by all the ancients, and all modern writers too, with few exceptions, to have been the city of Rome. Where

is Peter then to-day, where is Christ's Church? This Church was founded on Peter and it was to exist till the consummation of the world. To find it, to find the fold of Christ we must look for the Church with Peter written on its foundation. Who then is the Successor of St. Peter? The Bishop or Pope of Rome. Through the long ages of history, none have ever claimed to be the lawful successors of St. Peter, but the bishops of Rome. This is a fact which friends and foes admit. Whoever then holds to-day Peter's office, must hold Peter's gifts and prerogatives. The Popes of Rome have ever claimed to be the successors of that first great Pope or Bishop of Rome, and they have confessedly been admitted and held as such by the Church, during the long range of centuries that are past. Therefore the Infallibility and Supremacy are as much the Pope's to-day as they were Peter's in the past. Since Christ's Church must exist to-day as it did in the beginning, and must have its infallible foundation with it, since Christ's Church being the Universal Church was to bring the Gospel to every creature, and to whom all were bound to listen under penalty of condemnation, she must still have her Supreme Infallible Ruler, who now confirms his brethren, and feeds the whole flock. What is Leo xiii. doing but feeding the sheep and the lambs, when, like his Divine Master, he is calling upon men to put away their religious differences, to hear

Christ's Voice, so that there may be once more "one fold and one Shepherd."

12. What Papal Infallibility means.—Full power as we have seen, was given to the Popes, in the person of St. Peter by Our Lord, to rule, to nourish, and to govern the Church. Bishops, priests, and laity, are all subject to the Pope, in all that concerns faith or morals, discipline, and Church government. The effects of this submission are, that the Church is one flock, obeying one shepherd, and that the "faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude i. 3). is preserved incorrupt. A simple test of Catholicity is acknowledgement of the Pope's Supremacy, and through this acknowledgement, millions of Catholics in the past, and millions at present, are absolutely one in faith, and in the essential practices of religion. Whereas those who refuse to submit to the Pope, are divided into hundreds of warring sects, each in hopeless confusion and uncertainty.

The infallibility of the Pope must not be confused, nor taken for something else. It does not mean impeccability. It means simply this. When the Pope as Shepherd and Teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his Supreme Authority, defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals, to be held by the whole Church, then the Pope is infallible, he cannot err. "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and thou being once converted confirm thy brethren."

In cases of doubt or dispute, whether any doctrine is, or is not contained in the Christain Revelation, or is, or is not in accordance with this Revelation; or whether any act is in itself morally right or wrong, the Pope, is the highest judge on earth, the final infallible court of appeal. By virtue of his Supremacy, his solemn decision in all such cases is binding upon the consciences of the faithful. Through Christ's prayer, we have a Divine guarantee, that his final and solemn decisions in matters of faith and morals, shall be always right and true, for he cannot err in these decisions. But notice that the Pope has no power to make new doctrines, for Infallibility is not inspiration; notice also that wise as he no doubt is, he is not infallible in science nor arts, nor in mere mundane matters. But remember that he is infallible in faith and morals, when as Supreme Pastor of the Church, he teaches or confirms his brethren, in his final solemn decisions, whether moral or dogmatical. His office is, to maintain pure and incorrupt, and expound the ancient faith delivered to the saints. Hence we see very clearly that the Pope's Primacy and Infallibility uphold, preserve, and maintain the unity of Christ's Church; unity of faith, unity of practice, unity of obedience, in fine unity that distinctly excludes all division.

Conclusion.—Brethren, the Holy Father, remembering the words of Christ: "Other sheep I

have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd;" has called upon the straying sheep with words of love and kindness. He has asked men to put away religious differences, to hear Christ's voice, and return to Christ's fold. True, many oppose him, many even abuse him, many call upon him to make concessions which he cannot grant, because the Church must stand for ever as her Master left her. Yet be not dismayed, be not disheartened. Remember that the Jewish sects rejected and abused Our Lord. He had but a few faithful followers during His life on earth. But after His Ascension, behold how the Church spread over the entire world. So it may be with this grand and great work of Re-union. We may not see the full accomplishment of the Holy Father's wishes, yet we are rejoiced to know that week after week, many souls are returning to the true fold of Christ. And if we second the Holy Father's efforts, and become apostles in this matter we can do a great deal to bring it to a successful issue. The seeds should be sown now, though the full harvest may come much later. Catholics have their duties with regard to Re-union. First of all we must lead a good holy life, and be not by our evil example a hindrance or a stumbling block to those who would embrace our holy faith. We must also exhibit every possible kindness in every way to those outside the Church.

Lastly let our prayers for Re-union be fervent and continual, remembering, that nothing can resist the power of prayer. Non-Catholics have also their duties in this matter. They should examine with sincerity and candour, the claims of the Catholic Church. This they can do, by seeking out her authorised teachers and pastors, in a word, her priests. It is not from a sneering press, often full of untruths, mistakes, and ridicule concerning Catholicism, that they should seek to know what Catholicism is. Nor should they enquire amongst non-Catholic friends, who may be prejudiced, and are often ignorant of the Catholic faith, and can therefore only give their own garbled version of it, which is always weak and faulty, and sometimes entirely wrong. No, let them go to the fountain head, to the priests of the Catholic Church, and pray often and earnestly, and then obey God's will at whatever cost.

Thus if all in Charity work together, if all do their duty in this most important matter, prejudice against the Pope will vanish, as the knowledge of the Catholic faith becomes greater. Individual souls will be received into the Church, they will return to the true fold; and as in the early days of Christianity, after Our Lord's Ascension, nation after nation entered the Church of Christ till it embraced well nigh the whole world; so perhaps in the near future, after we are gone, the work which

has been begun, the seed which has been sown, may produce a rich harvest. Then the prayer of Leo and our prayers will be answered. The straying sheep outside the fold of Christ, will recognise their true Shepherd, hear His voice and return. And then again there shall be, "one fold and one shepherd" having "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

THE FOSTER-FATHER OF CHRIST.

SYNOPSIS.

The Foster-Father of Christ.

"And Joseph rising up from sleep, did as the Angel of the Lord had commanded him."—St. Matt. i. 24.

Introduction . . The Patronage of St. Joseph.

Men's mistaken notions about the Saints
1. Appropriateness of St. Joseph as Patron.
2. The World's hatred of the saints.
3. Catholics' mistaken notions about the saints.

The Principles of St. Joseph's Perfection
4. St. Joseph, a model for us.
5. Obedience of St. Joseph.
6. Analysis of St. Joseph's obedience.

Conclusion . . . Our task much the same—Therefore we must pray for grace to imitate him.

THE FOSTER-FATHER OF CHRIST.

(THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.)

"And Joseph rising from his sleep, did as the Angel of the Lord had commanded him."—St. Matt. i. 24.

INTRODUCTION.

The Patronage of St. Joseph.—To-day, my brethren, with befitting pomp and splendour, the Church celebrates the feast of her Patron and Protector. It is not our intention to preach the panegyric of St. Joseph, since want of time will not allow us, but we shall take some details from his life, and having analysed them, we shall study well the lessons which they teach us, and see then how we can practically carry them into our daily lives.

MEN'S MISTAKEN NOTIONS ABOUT THE SAINTS.

1. Appropriateness of St. Joseph as Patron.—It seems but fitting that the Church of God, should be placed under the protection of that great saint, whom our Lord obeyed so well on earth. Yet if we examine this more closely, we shall find a more important reason why it should be so. The Church does not from time to time put her saints before us that we may simply "sing their praises," but she ever urges us, to "show forth their wisdom," and

imitate them by walking in their footsteps; and though after Our Lady, there is perhaps no saint in Heaven higher than St. Joseph, yet he is in every way, the most simple and yet most beautiful model, which the Church can set before us for our consolation and imitation.

2. The world's hatred of the saints.—If we look around the world, we find many wallowing in the sink of luxury and corruption, men given up to their evil passions, to every kind of sin; canonising vice under the name of virtue, delivering up to contempt religion and holiness, under the mask of liberty, and thus gnawing away, the very heart-strings of Christian morality. Speak not to such as these about the saints, for they hate and detest them; and ere now their anger and their fury, have been the whetstone that sharpened the sword, the flame which kindled the fire, that won for the saints the martyr's crown. Talk not to them about imitating these heroes of God, for they labour with all the powers they have, to tear down the standard of the Cross, to annihilate religion, and to deify their own idols of pleasure and sinful reason. Away with humility let them be great, away with mortification let them be sensual. Away with Christ, and let the principles and doctrines of Christianity be blotted out. Such indeed are a few of the many things which men of the world propagate. They detest the saints, as our Lord foretold they would, because

the saints represent Him and teach His doctrines, by obeying and putting into practice His precepts.

3. Catholics' mistaken notions about the saints.—But if the enemies of God thus hate the saints, there are men who call themselves Catholics, to whom the perfection of the saints seems more an exterior quality, than an inward principle of the soul. They look upon the saints as so many mystic heroes, and lay aside the record of their lives with the thought that such a life cannot be theirs. This is utter folly, for until we fully realise, who and what the saints are, we shall never fully know what is required of us. Until then our religion will be a mere sentiment, an empty routine without any soul in it. Christ came to be our Model, and to reduce His own laws to practice, and what are the saints but a continuation of His life. In them He lives again, in them He completes the lessons which He taught at Nazareth, and on the hills and in the valleys of Judea. The saints took hold of their religion, they made its precepts the very motive power of their existence, and they thus brought it practically into their daily lives. And let us remember this great and important truth, that, it is only by doing the same, only by being holy, that we can be saved, for nothing defiled, nothing but a saintly soul can enter Heaven. We make a great mistake then, when we set the saints up on pedestals, and think that they

are beings with a nature different to our own. No, we must take them down, place them in our positions, and then watch them at their work, and we shall indeed be much surprised when we have done so. They were in the same positions that we are in, they had the same duties to perform, the same Gospel to obey, and in many cases the same temptations to battle with. They were not made of iron, but of flesh and blood as we are; and they became perfect, not by doing great or extraordinary things, but by attending simply to the duties of their state, and performing them with the greatest exactness, for the love of God. But you urge the saints wrought miracles. Some did and some did not, yet sanctity does not consist in working miracles, this is but the result, the fruit of sanctity. There are many now in the world, who would be seated hereafter amongst the greatest saints in Heaven, if they only corresponded with the many graces that God has offered to them, and they might have worked miracles also. But the rudiments, and principles of the Spiritual life prove to us beyond doubt, that holiness and perfection do not consist in working miracles since there are saints in Heaven, who have never wrought one.

THE PRINCIPLES OF ST. JOSEPH'S PERFECTION.

4. St. Joseph a model for us.—To come home to our point, what miracles do we find in the life of

St. Joseph, what is there in his life that we cannot copy into ours? Change the time, change the place, and the life of Christ's foster-father is almost identical with our own. He is a poor simple workman labouring at his trade, like any workman of to-day. And yet carry your thoughts to Heaven and see how great St. Joseph is there, and should you wish to know the depths of his sanctity, listen to the Holy Ghost Who tells us in the Scriptures that Joseph was a just man. Fancy what it is to be just before a God, in Whose sight the pillars of Heaven tremble, and angels veil their faces. Yet before such a God, Joseph was a just man.

5. Obedience of St. Joseph.—But let us descend from theory and come to concrete practice, and we shall find one grand yet simple principle running through the whole of St. Joseph's life. It is based first of all on the pure love of God, and then on common sense. The principle may be resolved into this; that since reason shows that God alone is worthy of man's love and labour, therefore Joseph is determined to obey God perfectly, and to do all things that pertained to his state of life, with a view of honouring and pleasing God. Who can describe the anguish of St. Joseph when he saw Our Lady's condition yet knew not the mystery wrought in her. Sadly and silently he went about his work, pain and sorrow eating into his heart. But he being a just man, did not wish publicly to

expose her, and was minded to put her away privately (St. Matt. i. 19). But whilst he was thinking thus, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in sleep and said: "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. For He shall save His people from their sins" (St. Matt. i. 20-21). Here we have a distinct command to St. Joseph and what did the saint do? He at once obeyed God. "And Joseph rising up from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him" (ver. 24).

Nine long months have passed and the Babe of Bethlehem reposes on Its Mother's bosom. But lo, an angel comes again to Joseph in the dark still night and says: "Arise and take the Child and His Mother, and fly into Egypt: and be there until I shall tell thee. For it will come to pass that Herod will seek the Child to destroy Him" (St. Matt. ii. 13). What! must St. Joseph and Our Lady leave their home and friends, and go amidst strangers into a hostile and heathen nation? And surely such a journey as this will almost kill the Holy Child, and why cannot He Who is God work some miracle and save Himself without all this trouble? At least Joseph will wait till morning? No, the angel said "arise," and promptly the aged saint obeys: "Who arose and took the Child and His mother by

night and entered into Egypt: and he was there until the death of Herod" (chap. ii. ver. 14.) Note here how punctual, how prompt, how exact is St. Joseph in his obedience. The angel appears at night to the saint and says "arise," and there and then Joseph rises and obeys. There is here no delay, no arguing nor hesitation, but obedience at once. Again, a third time the angel appears to the saint in his sleep and says: "Arise and take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel. For they are dead who sought the life of the Child" (chap. ii., ver. 20). And Joseph instantly obeyed the Lord's command.

6. Analysis of St. Joseph's obedience.—And now you may ask did not so great a saint work any miracles? We find no record of his having done so. What then made him so great? We have seen that it is his obedience, but if we analyse this obedience the answer to the question will be rendered clear. St. Joseph was most intimately united to God by the most perfect charity or love which man can have in this world. This love or charity dwelt in his heart, subdued all passion, excluded everything in the shape of sin; and continually prompted him to make acts of the most fervent love for his Creator. This charity, was the soul so to speak, which vivified all the other virtues which filled the heart of the saint, it was the mainspring of them all; for charity is not only the queen of virtues but the

parent also. "If you love Me," says Our Lord, "Keep My commandments" (St. John xiv. 14). The love or charity which St. Joseph had for God then, made him eager to do all his Creator wished and in the way He wished. Thus his perfection may be described, as the most perfect obedience, springing from his intense love of God, which urged him to obey, and to perform all the duties of his state of life, with the greatest possible fervour, perseverance and exactness. Fervour, because he put his whole soul into the performance, perseverence, because he ceased not but continued always to obey, exactness, because he did all in the way God wished it done, and at the time, and in the place, God willed it to be performed. Now if we realise fully what is meant by the truth, that God is our Creator, and we are His creatures, we must see that we cannot please God better, than by doing what God wants us to do, and doing it at the time, in the way, and in the place which He wishes, and this for His honour and glory. This, holy writers call "Conformity to the will of God." We may therefore say with St. Teresa; that, perfection does not consist in doing extraordinary things, but in doing little things extraordinarily well. And these things which we ought to do thus are to be found especially in our state of life. "If you love Me, keep My Commandments." If you love Me, keep to and obey My wishes, in all your thoughts, words, and works. St. Joseph did

love his God with an intense love, and therefore in all his thoughts, words, and deeds, he obeyed his God most exactly.

Conclusion.—Brethren, the great work of St. Joseph was to guard and protect the Divine Child, the Son of God. We likewise have a treasure to protect and save, our immortal souls. Beloved indeed was the Divine Child to His Eternal Father, and dear to our Creator are these precious souls of ours. The Crib, the Cross, and the Tabernacle prove this to us. Gaze but a moment at your Crucifix and you will understand this. We have our directions too as St. Joseph had, telling us what to do. We have not indeed an angel bringing us direct commands from Heaven, but we have something just as sure, the teaching of the infallible Church of Christ. Were it possible for an angel, yet it is not possible for her to be mistaken. Since then our task is in a way like to that of St. Joseph, we cannot do better than take him for our model, and therefore we must strive to copy his life, and fashion ours like it. We must do our best to fill our hearts with a deep and fervent love of God, so that it may move us to obey God promptly, and do all things as fervently, as exactly, and as perseveringly as St. Joseph did. On this the great feast of his Patronage, let us earnestly ask him to intercede for us with God, and beg Him to pour into our soul those graces which will move us, and make us

desire to become as perfect as he, of whom the Gospel says: "And Joseph rising from his sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him."

HOW I SHOULD RECEIVE MY GOD.

How I Should Receive My God.

"But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning, the body of the Lord."—1 Cor. xi. 28-29

Introduction . . The weighty words of St. Paul.

The terrible sin of receiving Holy Communion unworthily
1. Worse than the sin of parricide.
2. Worse than the crimes of Judas and the Jews.
3. Severe punishments of unworthy communicants.

General preparation for Holy Communion
4. Living well in our state.
5. Being particular about our Confessions.
6. By striving after perfection.

Actual preparation for Holy Communion
7. By acts of Faith.
8. By sincere acts of contrition.
9. By fervent acts of hope.
10. By fervent acts of charity.

Why we should go often to Holy Communion
11. To gain strength.
12. To please Our Lord.
13. To obey Christ's command.

Conclusion . . Proving ourselves should for us mean striving after perfection.

HOW I SHOULD RECEIVE MY GOD.

(CORPUS CHRISTI).

"But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgement to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."—1. Cor. xi. 28-29.

INTRODUCTION.

The weighty words of St. Paul. — Never perhaps, brethren, did St. Paul utter more serious or more weighty words. Having explained to the Corinthians the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, he then speaks of the dispositions they should have who receive It. He tells them to "prove" themselves; for he continues: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgement to himself." What a weighty, what a serious sentence, he that communicates unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own condemnation. Truly the greatest act of worship a creature on this earth can pay to his Creator, is to receive Him as his food in this Tremendous Mystery. Yet, when we remember that in this Mystery we receive an all holy God, Who is Sanctity Itself, how earnestly should we strive to make ourselves as worthy as we possibly can, by a fervent and zealous preparation for His coming.

THE TERRIBLE SIN OF RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION UNWORTHILY.

1. Is like to the sin of parricide.—When an ancient lawgiver was asked, why he made no law against those who killed their parents, he answered that such a crime was impossible, as there could not be found, children unnatural enough to commit it. What a happy thing it would be if the same could be said with regard to the Holy Communion, if there were no children of God, unnatural enough to receive It unworthily. But alas, it cannot be said, and though the reception of Holy Communion unworthily is a most serious crime, yet it is by no means uncommon, even amongst so-called religious people. Those who would shrink in horror and fear from injuring their parents, are not afraid of offending God, by receiving Him into sinful and polluted hearts. Children receive from earthly parents but a fading mortal life, whilst God offers to His children a supernatural and eternal life, and nourishes them with His own Substance, His Body and His Blood; and these ungrateful, unnatural children, crucify and make a mockery of Him, by receiving Him into sinful souls. What a fearful crime! Surely those who do so, must excel Satan in malice and sin, for he could not suggest a more fearful one. What wonder then if St. Paul says; "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinkthe judgment to himself."

2. Worse than the crime of Judas and the Jews.—These words of the Apostle are plain enough, and should fill us with terror. By eating the Body and drinking the Blood of Christ unworthily, we become guilty of the judgment. That is, we despise and treat with contempt His adorable Flesh and Blood, and receive this Sacred Food, into souls, into temples that are in the possession of His most deadly enemy. Thus our crime is similar to that of Judas, but greater than his, since we now know Christ's love for us, know and fully acknowledge Him to be our God. What difference is there between us and the Jewish soldiers who tortured Our Lord so much? Again our crime is much greater when we receive unworthily, because we are more enlightened than they were, we are not heathens but His own children. Our crime then is far more terrible than either those of Judas or the Jewish soldiers, or even of those who cried out like the Jews "Crucify Him, Crucify Him," and it is to such a crime as an unworthy Communion that St. Paul refers when he says: "How much more do you think he deserveth worse punishments, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath esteemed the blood of the testament unclean, by which he was sanctified, and hath offered an affront to the Spirit of Grace?" (Heb. x. 29). Does not our soul seem to recoil in horror at the thought of the crimes here mentioned, and yet they

are contained in the crime of the unworthy communicant. For, does not such a sinner act as though he deemed the Precious Blood, shed to sanctify him, as if unclean, when he receives it into an unclean soul, and does he not so to speak trample upon Our Lord, when he receives Him in serious sin? Surely he could not affront the Spirit of Grace, the Spirit of God, more than by acting in this manner.

3. Severe punishment of unworthy Communicants.—History has many terrible examples of the severe punishments inflicted by God upon unworthy communicants. Judas received Holy Communion unworthily and in the Acts of the Apostles, we see his end. After he had received the Body and Blood of his Divine Master he went out and betrayed Him. Covetous and full of greed for money, he went to the chief priests some time before the Last Supper and said to them: "What will you give me and I will deliver Him unto you?" And they appointed him thirty pieces of silver, and from that moment he sought to betray Him. (St. Matt. xxvi. 14-16). Yet although he had made this disgraceful arrangement with the Jews, we find him present at the Supper (St. Matt. xxvi. 25), and we know according to the same Evangelist, he returned after Our Lord was condemned, and cast the bloody money before the chief priests and the ancients, and cried out that he had sinned

(St. Matt. xxvii.). But it remains for St. Peter at the election of Matthias to tell us what the end of Judas was: "And he hath possessed a field of the reward of iniquity, and being hanged burst asunder in the midst; and all his bowels gushed out" (Acts i. 18). What a fearful death for one who had been an Apostle, who had received many favours from Christ. Truly did he eat and drink judgment to himself by his unworthy communion. St. Chrysostom relates many unworthy communicants dropping dead, and history points out to other fearful punishments. It matters not if some such communicants have not been yet punished in this world, they most certainly will in the next.

GENERAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION.

4. Living well in our state of life.—But many of course will say, "we do not receive in mortal sin." Thank God, that is well. But in what state do we go to Communion, what preparation do we make, how do we actually receive Our God? There are few things truer than the saying, that "familiarity with holy things breeds contempt for them;" and therefore the oftener we receive Holy Communion, the greater danger there is of receiving It in a routine sort of way without preparation, without care. The morning comes it is our Communion day, we are sometimes late in arriving at Church, we have not time to prepare,

and we go almost without preparation. There is more than enough here to make us pause and consider St. Paul's words: "Let a man prove himself." Now the word "prove," may here be taken as meaning the word "prepare," and hence the Apostle's warning may be taken to read thus: "Let a man prepare himself, and so let him eat of that body, and drink of the chalice." What then must be our preparation? We divide preparation into general and actual; general is that which we should always be making, actual is that which we should make just before receiving.

The first preparation requires purity of conscience, and to have this we must live up to our state of life, and perform all the duties pertaining to that state, as well as we possibly can. We must do our utmost to keep from sin, not only in our intercourse with the world in general, but especially in that special position in which God has placed us, and where most of our time is spent. Every sin sullies the purity of our soul, and therefore renders us more or less unworthy of receiving Holy Communion. Do you think that being unkind and domineering to those around you, that your lying, and sharp cutting speeches, which reveal a hateful temper, will cause God to love you more, or make you more worthy of Holy Communion? Certainly not. And again what about your vanity and pride, your disobedience, your want of prayer and other sins you

may commit, are not these but so many signs of your unworthiness to receive the Divine Food? And ask yourselves, do you get better in conduct, more perfect than you used to be? If not, then what benefit have you derived from your former Communions, what use have you made of the graces then given to you? Remember that your hearts are vessels made to contain grace, and just as the pitcher that is almost full of sand can receive little or no water, so the heart that is full of, or partly filled with even small sins can hold but little grace. Look then upon every sin as an obstacle to your receiving Communion worthily: they may not indeed make you entirely unworthy, but they hinder your receiving many precious graces; the more sin there is in your hearts the less room there is for grace.

5. By being particular about our Confessions.—Again you urge that you go frequently to Confession. Yes, but what improvement do you find in your life after going so often, and how do you make your Confessions? Many go through mere routine, with little or no preparation except a few minutes spent in the Church. And what are the essentials of a good Confession? There are two essentials amongst others which are most conspicuous; contrition, or a hearty sorrow for sin; and a purpose of amendment, or a firm determination not to sin again. Now how often do we find,

that people who have gone to Confession the evening before and have received Holy Communion on Sunday morning, are almost as bad and as sinful as ever before Sunday evening. Their tongues are still as sharp, their speeches as cutting, their actions as unkind, and their temper as quickly roused as it was before they went to Confession. What then about their sorrow for sin, their purpose of amendment? They told God they were sorry for having offended Him and that they would do so no more. But they have done so, even on their Communion day. Were they sincere then, were they at all truthful in their promises? Here indeed is a serious matter for our consideration. And again, when we examine our consciences, are we careful to find out the number of our sins, and the aggravating circumstances which often change the nature of sins altogether? Surely we know that to sin even once is wrong, but to sin ten or fifteen times is much worse, and to contract a habit of sin is even more serious. It is not right then to go to Confession and say I have done this and that, without mentioning the number of our sins, and any circumstances which may change their nature. The soul that falls into venial sin once is far more worthy to receive Holy Communion, than the soul which sins many times, or habitually. Very strictly then must we examine the way in which we make our Confessions, lest by our carelessness, we turn this

holy means of making us worthy of Communion, into that which will make us still more unworthy. "Let a man prove himself." We must indeed prove or probe our hearts, and see if we are not abusing instead of using properly, the great Sacrament of Penance. Each Confession ought to be made as though it were to be our last, as though we were dying.

6. By striving after perfection.—But if living well be a good preparation, then striving after perfection in our state of life is better still, and will make us more worthy to receive our God. To seek after perfection in our state, means, that we perform every duty belonging to it as perfectly as we can, that is, with punctuality, exactness, fervour and perseverance. Punctuality requires that we perform the duty at the proper time, and in the proper place in which it should be performed. Exactness means that we do it thoroughly and well and carefully. Fervour does not mean that we must have a liking for it, or a pleasure in doing it, but it means that we must put our heart and soul into it, and do it whether we like it or not. But above all, we must perform the duties which belong to our position, with a true internal spirit, that is, with the desire of honouring and pleasing God by them. It is this spirit which gives life to our actions, and renders them meritorious in the sight of God. Here then is another matter for our con-

tinual study, for the more perfect we become, the more worthy are we to approach the Holy Table.

ACTUAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION.

7. By acts of faith.—But the morning comes on which we are to receive, and we should be in Church preparing at least half an hour before the actual moment of approaching Holy Communion. We shall find many beautiful forms of devotions and preparation in our prayer books, which it is most wise to use. You must not think that we are asking you to put these forms of devotion aside, on the contrary, we urge you to make the very best use of them. We wish but to suggest here, a few acts of devotion which you should make, just before you move to the altar rails. The first should be an act of lively faith, for faith is the first movement of the soul to God, and is necessary when we participate in the mysteries of religion, and especially in the Adorable Mystery of the Holy Eucharist. Let us transport ourselves in thought but a moment to the Supper-room in Jerusalem. Christ is seated in the midst of His Apostles, and He takes bread into His hands, blesses it, and breaks it, and gives it to them, saying: "Take ye and eat. For this is My Body." Afterwards taking the chalice containing wine, He gave thanks, and gives it to them saying: "Drink ye all of this. For this is My Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for

many unto the remission of sins." Then He adds: "Do this for a commemoration of Me" (St. Matt. xxvi. 26-28; St. Mark xiv. 22-24; St. Luke xxii. 19). The very institution then of the Holy Eucharist, teaches us the Real Presence of Christ therein. Wonderful then is the fact, that we are going to receive in the Holy Communion, the Body and Blood, the Soul and Divinity of Our loving Lord, with all their Sanctity, gifts and graces. How wonderful that our God should deign to bestow upon us this astounding boon. But He has said it, He is Truth, He cannot deceive, and let us make a firm and lively act of faith, and strive to realise all that we receive in going to the Holy Table.

8. By sincere acts of contrition.—Yet when we think of the most wonderful purity of God, of His awful majesty and holiness, the truth must come home to us, that we are not worthy enough to receive Him. What can God see in us that makes Him condescend to become our very food? At the best we are but poor wretched worms made from the slime of the earth. When we think also of our many transgressions against our Creator, this ought to make us more humble still, and show us how unworthy we are to receive Him. Our want of prayer, our deviations from truth, our peevishness, and our many venial faults and imperfections, lessen that perfection which we should bring with us to the Holy Table. Hence we should

be most careful to make the most fervent act of contrition in our power, begging God to forgive our unworthiness, and pleading with Him to enrich our souls with the graces and virtues, which will make them fit for His Sacred Presence.

9. By fervent acts of hope.—And again we know, that when Our Lord in the Holy Communion will enter into our souls, He will bring with Him countless graces, which He will give to us if we ask for them. We must then at this moment try our utmost to think of all the graces that we require, and convinced and taught by our holy faith, that God Who is Truth, and cannot deceive us, and Who has told us to ask that we may receive; we must trust that He will give us all we ask, all that we require, and help us in every way to avoid the snares of life and secure Heaven.

10. By fervent acts of charity.—Hope and love are closely allied, and when we think of all that Our Lord gives us in the Holy Communion, we must indeed see His wondrous and astounding love of us. And if He loves us so will we not love Him? Were we absolutely certain that some human being having power, were coming to lay at our feet the greatest treasures which this world contains, would we not yearn for His coming, and would we not love him? Beyond doubt we would, and yet what can even the most powerful and wealthy man on earth give us in comparison to what Our loving

Lord gives us in the Holy Eucharist? Surely then we must long for His coming, and need not be urged to make acts of the most fervent love, since the goodness and love of Christ in this Adorable Mystery, must move and fill with emotion, even the most hard and stony hearts. Be careful then just before you approach the Holy Table, to make your preparatory acts of faith, contrition, hope and love, which will in a great measure, help to make your souls worthy and pure enough to receive your God.

WHY WE SHOULD GO OFTEN TO HOLY COMMUNION.

11. To gain strength.—The Eternal Father, in giving us His Son, has given us everything great and good; and the most valuable blessings flow from a worthy Communion. The love and power of God are indeed not confined to any time or place; nevertheless, it is in the Holy Eucharist that He gives the liveliest expressions of His love for mankind. He treats us as He did Zacheus: He enters our house and brings with Him peace and salvation. When He enters our souls He whispers to us; "He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me, and I in him" (St. John vi. 57). From such a union what happiness must result. Holy writers agree, that in this Sacrament God pours into the soul of man such an abundance of graces,

as would naturally raise and fix him in a state of sanctity, did it not meet with great obstacles on man's side. It is the peculiar effect of this Sacrament to nourish the soul, and to impart to it all the strength and vigour, it can admit of. Since Our Lord has declared "My Flesh is meat indeed: and My Blood is drink indeed" (St. John vi. 56), it follows it must have the same effect upon the soul, that material food has upon the body; namely the effect of keeping it alive, and preserving it in full vigour and strength. This is then but one effect of receiving Holy Communion worthily.

12. To please Our Lord.—Again, let us remember that by a good and Holy Communion we establish a union between Our Lord and ourselves. At the moment of receiving, and as long as the sacred species remain, Christ is substantially present, His Body and Blood, His Soul and Divinity, in the body and soul of the recipient, animating him with sentiments of love and fervour In this consists the union of Christ with men. The Catholic doctrine then on this Holy Mystery teaches us, that when we worthily receive our Lord, He truly communicates with us, and remains with us physically and substantially, to be our food and nourishment, until the accidents or species become changed by the natural functions of our bodies. Now the end of the Holy Communion is to unite Our Lord with His children and

when they have the necessary dispositions, there results a union between them and Christ, the greatest and most intimate union that can exist here on earth. When the species have disappeared He will live united to us, by His graces, communicating to us His thoughts, His inclinations, His desires, His will, His love, according to the needs of our interior life (cf. Père Mousabré, Conference, V.) Well then may Our Lord say: He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me, and I in him" (St. John vi. 57). These very words show that He wants to be with us. Because it is for our good, because He wishes to strengthen us, to protect and direct us, and help us on in every way to Heaven. He has also told us that His delight is to be with the children of men, and this is one of the reasons why He remains on earth in the Holy Eucharist. What glory then we give to Our Lord when we receive Him worthily, and thus form with Him a union that will last not for a little while, but for ever, unless we dissolve it by committing mortal sin.

13. To obey Christ's Command.—Speaking to the Jews, Our Lord said: "Amen, amen I say unto you, except you eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you" (St. John vi. 54). There is a Divine precept insinuated in these words, and hence our holy Mother the Church, in her Fifth Precept distinctly

commands her children, "To receive the Blessed Sacrament at least once a year, and that at Easter or thereabouts." There is then here a positive command of our Lord which we must obey. "Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you." And the Church taking up these words commands us to do so at least once a year. But what soul that is generous, what soul that knows how much Our Lord yearns to come to us, will be satisfied with receiving once every year? It is not prudent for any soul who desires to live in the grace of God, to remain away from the Holy Table more than a month. But those who as a rule avoid mortal sin, and are striving to avoid even venial sins and imperfections, and to lead a more perfect life, may communicate once a fortnight or even oftener, but all must seek and obey the advice of their Confessor in this matter. Try your utmost then to fulfil this command of Our Lord, when He tells you to receive Him, go often to the Holy Table, but never on any account approach in mortal sin.

Conclusion.—Brethren, it is an article of our holy faith, the strongest and most beautiful pillar in our holy religion, that in the Holy Eucharist we receive the Body and Blood, the Soul and Divinity of Our Lord. And we know also from the Sacred Scriptures, from the teaching of the Church, and the writings of holy men, that Christ has left Him-

self on earth, that He might be always with us, for His delight is to be with the children of men. As often as we can, as often as our Confessor permits us we must receive Him in Holy Communion, yet we must never commit the horrible sacrilege of receiving Him in mortal sin. We must prove ourselves as St. Paul tells us, and prepare for the reception of Our God. This proving ourselves should not mean only the putting away of mortal sin, but it should consist in our living well, seeking perfection, and being most careful about our Confessions. Then with love, with lively faith, and with contrition we should approach, and the more worthy we are, the more treasures of grace will Our Lord pour into our souls in this life, and God's grace here is a certain pledge of happiness hereafter. Prove yourselves then brethren, and then with joy, eat the Flesh and drink the Blood, of our most loving Lord.

THE TRUE BREAD OF ETERNAL LIFE.

SYNOPSIS.

The True Bread of Eternal Life.

"And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out saying, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."—St. Luke xviii. 37-38.

Introduction . . The blind man of Jericho.

God ever truly present in the World
1. God truly present in the Holy Eucharist.
2. God present in Eden.
3. God actually lives in the world.

Christ truly present in the Holy Eucharist
4. The Institution of the Holy Eucharist.
5. Christ Himself on the Real Presence.
6. St. Paul on the Real Presence.

Conclusion . . Catholic to pray for graces and blessing—Non-Catholic for faith in the Holy Eucharist.

THE TRUE BREAD OF ETERNAL LIFE.

(SERMON FOR PROCESSIONS).

"And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out saying, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."
St. Luke xviii. 37-38.

INTRODUCTION.

The blind man of Jericho.—How beautiful, my brethren, how touching, is the history of the blind man of Jericho. In how many large towns have we not his counterpart. There they remain out in the streets in the bitter cold of winter, or the scorching heat of summer, helpless, and often homeless, waiting for the charity of their more fortunate fellow beings. Alas, to our shame be it said, our charity is but scant and meagre, nay, we often pass them by without even a thought of pity. But how different was the scene that took place on the outskirts of Jericho. Our Lord is approaching the city, and as usual a crowd of people surround Him, anxious to gaze upon Him, and hear every word that falls from His Sacred Lips. Slowly the surging mass moves on, passing the spot where the blind man is seated, and he wonders what is causing all this tumult, all this noise; and when he asks they tell him, that "Jesus of Nazareth

is passing by." What Jesus the great wonder worker, Jesus, the Master, Who is so kind to the poor, the sick and the lame! Ah, what thoughts filled that poor man's mind, what emotions welled up in his soul! The crowd may rebuke him but he will not be quiet, for he knows that if the Master hears him he will be cured, and so he cries out the louder: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." Well indeed is his faith rewarded, for Our Lord does hear him and gives him his sight.

GOD EVER TRULY PRESENT IN THE WORLD.

1. God truly present in the Holy Eucharist.—And now, brethren, what will be your thoughts, what your feelings, when I tell you that this self-same Jesus will soon be carried through your midst, will soon be "passing by." How often in the past have we envied the Jews who could surround the Son of God, and gaze upon His Loving Countenance, and touch His Sacred Person. Ah, how we have yearned to look into His Face, to fall at His Feet, to touch even the hem of His garment. But why such longing, why such desires? Do we realise that Our God, Jesus of Nazareth, is ever with us, ever in our midst; that now at this very instant we are seated in His presence, and He is gazing upon us as He did upon the blind man of Jericho. His Sacred Heart is as full of love now as it was then, His hands contain as many graces, which He longs

to bestow upon us. Perhaps like the blind man we do not see our Lord; not indeed because we doubt His word, but because our faith is not vivid enough, to make us fully realise Who It is that is "passing by." The Catholic Church has ever taught that Christ is really and truly present in the most Holy Eucharist, and many of her children have nobly laid down their lives in defence of this holy dogma; but still some who believe all this may not have fully grasped the fact, that their God so great and holy, is so very near to them, that He daily mingles with them: and few indeed have ever sounded the wondrous depths of that fathomless love which keeps Him with us, which made him cry out, "My delight is to be with the children of men."

2. God present in Eden.—Had we not the words of Christ and the facts of history, we might be tempted to think that a God so truly great and wonderful, would remain away from us and care nothing about the doings of the human race. But no, God has ever been present in the world, present that we might know Him and follow Him, and see how much He loves us; present that we might recognise the fact, that He was not altogether shut up in the Heavens, but that He lived and moved amongst us. When the world was yet an infant, and our first parents had sullied their innocence, they heard their Creator walking in Eden in the afternoon air. "Adam where art thou?" Who

called thus? It was Adam's Lord, Who had been watching and had seen our parents fall, and now in a sweet yet powerful Voice, He calls them to account for it. This must have been a Real Presence, for it made itself known to the senses, and was so near and gracious, that it was like a friend conversing with a friend. What were the thoughts and emotions of our parents at this moment? Well they knew to Whom they were speaking; and measure if you can, their intense love, their awe, and reverence, as they thus conversed with their Creator and Lord. Did He come that day to curse and condemn them for their sins? No, He came with a heart full of love and pity, to promise a Redeemer, Whose Sacred Passion and Death would blot out their offences, and open once more the gates of Heaven. He could not let us perish, for He has said: "My delight is to be with the children of men."

3. God actually lives in the world.—When the hour decreed for the coming of the Redeemer had arrived, the Son of God was born at Bethlehem. For thirty three years, He lived on this earth like one of ourselves. Humble, lowly and despised, He passed through all the phases of our life, except that He was sinless. Was not this a Real Presence? Yes, indeed, "Jesus of Nazareth was passing by." So near was He that men beheld His Loving Features, men touched His Sacred Person, and they

heard the loving streams of wisdom which flowed in torrents from His Sacred Lips. God had been present in Eden, God had spoken to the Patriarchs and Prophets, but now God had actually become man. Now indeed He was not distant from us, for His love brought Him down from Heaven into our very midst, into our homes. As Father, Friend, and Brother, He went up and down the hills of Judea, scattering graces and blessings far and wide. Thus did He plead for our love, thus did He knock at our hearts, for truly His delight was to be with the children of men.

CHRIST TRULY PRESENT IN THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

4. The Institution of the Holy Eucharist.—But the time came when that holy life was well nigh spent, and the shadows of Gethsemani were almost upon Him. Soon He would die the death of the Cross, and even after His Resurrection, there would be but a few short days to spend with His loving children. Yet how tear Himself away from them, how part with those in whom His Sacred Heart delighted? Ah no, Jesus could not leave us alone and desolate; in Heaven we should ever be near Him, ever be with Him, and so His great love for us must needs turn this earth into Heaven by giving us Himself in the Holy Eucharist. Soon He would ascend from Olivet's heights to dwell with the Eternal Father, but before He does so, by one

act of His Omnipotence, He gives us this most Holy Sacrament; so that through It, He might remain for ever with us hidden on our altars. Surely no friend, no lover, except a God, could devise a more powerful means of winning, and retaining our love. Seated then with his Disciples at the Last Supper, Our Lord took bread into His hands, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to His Disciples to eat, saying: "This is My Body." And taking the chalice He gave thanks, and telling them all to drink of it He said: "This is My Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins." (St. Matt. xxvi. 26-28). Thus did Christ change bread and wine into His Own Most Precious Body and Blood; for what Christ took into His hands was bread but when He gave it to His disciples He said it was His Body, and in like manner when He took the chalice into His hands it contained wine, when He gave it to them He said it was His Blood. After this Christ said; "Do this for a commemoration of Me" (St Luke xxii. 19), thus giving the power, and at the same time a command, to the pastors of His Church, to do as He had done; namely, by saying the same words that He had said, to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood, and distribute the Holy Eucharist to the faithful. But there are some who tell us, that we must take Christ's words in a figurative, and not in their natural sense. To this

we answer that when Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist the time was past as St. John (xvi. 29) tells us, when Christ spoke in parables and figures; and if the words, "This is My Body, This is my Blood," were meant to denote only a commemorative resemblance between bread and wine and the Body and Blood of Christ, then they would be the most misleading words ever uttered. But we dare not accuse Christ of misleading us, hence we take His words in their natural sense, and they thus contain a last will and testament worthy of Our Lord's boundless power and love.

5. Christ's own teaching on the Real Presence.—But in order to make this perfectly clear, let us examine a discourse of Our Lord's, which St. John relates in the sixth chapter of his Gospel. And here we must notice that Christ is speaking of bread which He promises He will give to His disciples; it is a "living bread," which will sustain to "everlasting life:" "I am the living bread," He says "which came down from Heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world" (St. John vi. 51-52). Now at the Last Supper Christ fulfils His promise, and changes bread into His Body; and further examination of Christ's words in this same chapter will show us, that He most distinctly and emphatically teaches, that He does not intend to

give us something merely holy, nor something resembling Himself, but that He means to bestow upon us His own, Real True Body and Blood. He inculcates this fact again and again, and hence we have here, a lucid explanation of His words and actions at the Supper. St. John tells us, that one day Christ miraculously fed five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes. The next day the multitude seek Our Lord, and when they find Him, He takes this seasonable opportunity of speaking to them about the Holy Eucharist, Which He will institute at the Last Supper. Remarking that they sought Him because He had fed them on the previous day, He exhorts them to seek the food that will endure to everlasting life; and He goes on to tell them, that He Himself is the "living bread that will sustain them, the eating of which will gain for them "eternal life." "I am the living bread which came down from Heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world" (vi. 51-52). The Jews were astonished, and taking His words literally, they asked: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (v. 53), These very words show that the Jews understood Christ to say and mean, that they must eat His Real True Body, and not a symbol, not a figure of it; for Christ had said, "My flesh," and had they understood that He was merely going to give them some representation

of Himself, they would neither have been so surprised nor alarmed. And again, if they had in any way understood Him wrongly, Christ Who loved them so much would have quickly pointed out their error; but because they knew rightly what He said and meant, and that He was speaking literally, He does not correct them, but on the contrary inculcates again and again, that they must eat His Real Flesh. "Amen, Amen I say unto you except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day" (vi. 54-55). In this forcible manner Our Lord continues to speak for some time and many of His disciples said: "This is a hard saying and who can hear it?" (vi. 61). Here again we see that they understood Christ in the literal and true sense, for certainly it would be neither hard nor painful to be forced to receive something resembling Him. Yet Christ knowing this continues to tell them, that, they must eat really and truly His Body and drink His Blood; but He explains that He is not speaking of a gross carnal reception as of other foods which sustain the body, but a spiritual reception, though real and corporeal, which will sustain the soul. "If then," He says, "you shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before. It is the spirit that quickeneth the flesh profiteth nothing. The words

that I have spoken to you are Spirit and life" (vi 63-64). "If you see Me ascend into Heaven after I have risen from the dead, surely you will understand that I have power to give you My Flesh to eat. And do you not realise, that it is for the benefit of your souls that they may be sanctified and made holy through Me? It will profit you nothing unless you receive Me and eat My Flesh in this manner." After this many of Christ's disciples left Him, "they, went back and walked with Him no more" (vi 67). Think how painful this must have been to the Sacred Heart of Christ since He loved men so much. Would He not have called them back had they understood Him wrongly? Yes, indeed, but He let them go because they understood Him rightly, that is, to mean literally what He said. First of all then it is clear that the Jews understood Him to mean, that He would give them not a symbol, nor a figure of Himself, but His Real True Body and Blood; and secondly that Christ knew they understood Him thus, and still He inculcates again and again, that they must eat His Flesh and drink His Blood. This shows that He meant His words to be taken literally, and we are thus forced to conclude that Christ was defending His own Real Presence in the most Holy Eucharist, just as though He had foreseen and was answering those who object to It, at the present day. We have then in this discourse, a clear and lucid

explanation of His words and actions at the Last Supper. If He wished His Words to be literally taken in the first case when He was speaking to the Jews, so does He wish them to be taken in the second when He speaks at the Supper. The words and actions on both occasions are intimately connected, in the one He promises to give His "Flesh for the life of the world," in the other He fulfils this promise and gives His Flesh. "The bread that I will give," He says, "is My Flesh," when speaking to His Apostles at the Last Supper, He blesses bread and says; "This is My Body." Thus does He give what He formerly promised namely His Flesh, and if He wished and meant His words to be taken literally in the former case, so must they be taken in the latter; indeed so closely are the words and actions of Christ connected on both occasions, that we may truly say His words at the Supper are but the complement, the end of His discourse to the Jews. When He says then: "This is My Body; This is My Blood," His words are meant literally, and thus they prove His Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist.

6. St. Paul on the Real Presence.—St. Paul in the eleventh chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians also teaches the doctrine of Christ's Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist. After dwelling on the Institution of this most Holy Sacrament, he warns men not to receive It unworthily, because

to do so is a most terrible sin. "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily," says the Apostle, "eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord" (℣ 29). If we ponder a moment over these words, we shall see that St. Paul is also teaching the Real Presence. If we received in the Holy Eucharist some holy thing, or something resembling Our Lord, it would indeed be sinful to receive it unworthily; but it would not be so great a sin, as to bring upon ourselves the terrible punishment St. Paul mentions, when he says that the unworthy recipient eats and drinks his own "judgment" or damnation. But when we fully realise that the Holy Eucharist, is the Real True Body and Blood of Christ, our holy and most pure Redeemer, then indeed we see how terrible is the sin of receiving It unworthily. Indeed, St. Paul distinctly points this out, for he tells us that the sinner is condemned, precisely because he does not discern the Body of Our Lord. Because he does not perceive, grasp, realise, and understand, that Christ is really and truly present in the Holy Eucharist, and therefore does not prepare well to receive It, for this very reason, the unworthy recipient, eats and drinks his own judgment, or damnation. Such is the doctrine of St. Paul, the doctrine of the Real Presence.

Conclusion.—God then, brethren, has been ever truly present in the world, and He is truly present

with us now in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Soon He will be carried through your midst, soon, "Jesus of Nazareth" will be "passing by." True, you are not physically blind like the poor man of Jericho, but what of your soul? Are you blind to your many faults, your evil habits, your bad example? Are there no graces you want, no favours you seek? The Sacred Heart of Jesus is still as full of love, and His hands contain as many graces as they did that day near the gates of Jericho. When then, He is borne through your midst, bow your head in humble adoration, and fail not in your hearts, to cry out and make known your wants like the blind man of Jericho, and be certain that Christ will hear you and grant your prayers. And, if there be any here not of the Catholic faith, let them pray earnestly for spiritual light, that they may see like the poor man, and learn to know, love and adore Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, when "Jesus of Nazareth" is, "passing by."

INDIFFERENTISM TO RELIGION.

SYNOPSIS.

Indifferentism to Religion.

"Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the will of My Father Who is in Heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven."—St. Matt. vii. 21.

Introduction . . Indifferentism to religion.

Some Fundamental Ideas of Religion.

1. God is our Master and has made us for a purpose.
2. Which purpose He has made known to us by Divine Revelation.
3. And He founded a Church to teach all men why He made them.
4. And therefore we should hear that Church and obey its instructions.

Conclusion . . We must hear this Church and obey it, if we wish to be saved

INDIFFERENTISM TO RELIGION.

(SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST).

"Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven: but he that doth the will of My Father Who is in Heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven."—St. Matt. vii. 21.

INTRODUCTION

Indifferentism to Religion.—We live, brethren, in an age that is ever boasting of its progress, both intellectually and otherwise. Truly indeed the inventive genius of man is something marvellous, yet still we fancy, that the results seem to benefit, rather the upper circles of society, than the great masses of the people. Educational progress is the boast of the day, and yet that progress has not as a rule drawn men much nearer to God. If we wish to find the reason of this we have not far to go. For our educationalists put the world before God, and strive to fit the child to become a great citizen of the world, but neglect to instil into the youthful heart, the principles which will make him, a noble Christian, and fit him to enter the realms of bliss. Religion is more or less left out of our educational system, and children in our state schools, hear very little about God or their duties to Him, and little about their obligations towards

their fellow man. Need we be surprised then, since this has gone on for many years, to find a great number of people who in childhood, passed through these schools now living an irreligious life, and totally indifferent to all religion? Such people will tell you, that so long as they do not steal nor commit murder, they believe themselves to be as good as any religious people. They will inform you, that, they hear people say, that one religion is quite as good as another, and that religious people are always quarrelling and preaching against each other. Hence they will embrace no form of religion whatever. It is a lamentable fact, that in this enlightened land of ours, there are many who are leading this irreligious life, many who know little or nothing of God. If we watch such people we shall find, that, they are avaricious, vindictive, and are totally devoid of those finer instincts and sentiments, which true religion as a natural consequence, infuses into the hearts of those who profess it. Briefly then let us dwell upon Indifferentism to religion, and we will prove that man is bound to be religious, to worship and serve his Maker; and we will treat of Indifferentism in religion in our next discourse.

SOME FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS OF RELIGION.

1. God is our Master and has made us for a purpose.—That there is a great Supreme Being,

Who has made all things, our own reason tells us. For this reason arguing by experience tells us, that things cannot originate or make themselves. This Supreme Being we call God, and He is known to our reason as the Rewarder of the good, and the Punisher of the wicked. The whole human race bears testimony to His existence, for there has never yet been found a nation, nor a people, that had not a god of some kind or other which they worship, even though it be an idol. Everwhere, even among people of the most primitive and crude notions, there has been found a belief in the existence of God, and a belief that good deeds will be rewarded by Him, and evil deeds punished. These are truths which reason gives us, and which are confirmed by the consent of the whole of mankind. And we know that all Christians, whatever be their creed, firmly believe and profess the existence of God. We have moreover in the Holy Scriptures, a full and complete record of God creating the world, and all that it contains. We find that God created man and woman and placed them in Paradise for a special purpose; and what that purpose is we shall see presently (cf. Book of Genesis). But if we look around this world and see how great and wonderfully compact it is; if we note the stars above, and the earth beneath, the flowers, herbs and trees, each with its beauty and use; the insects, animals, birds and fishes and living things, with

their various natures and needful instincts; if we notice how all these beings work in harmony with each other, and produce continual and similar results, such as the seasons of the year, the currents of the oceans, the light of the sun by day, and the moon at night; if we notice all these various things, and most of all man with his great powers of reason and conscience; then our reason concludes, that the Creator of these things was a Being of Infinite Power and Wisdom. Now our own common sense will tell us, that such a wise Being, would never make a thing without a purpose. Even men will not make a useless thing. They always have some idea or purpose of utility in making it. And if the object made does not accomplish its purpose, does not do what he who made it wished it to do, he will try to alter it, but if he cannot make it work rightly, he will destroy it. So God Who is Wisdom Itself could not make man without a purpose, without an end, for it would be against His Wisdom. He then made us and placed us on this earth for certain reasons of His own, for a certain purpose.

2. Which purpose He has made known to us by Divine Revelation.—But if God made us for a special purpose, as we see He did, then surely it is His place, to tell us what this purpose is, it is only right and proper, that He should do so. The servant does not know his master's will until the master gives his commands. It is not the servant's

duty to order his master about nor dictate to him, for this would be presumption. But observe, God is more than our Master. A man in this world engages a servant who is free and may not choose to serve; but with God it is quite different, He gave us our very being, He made us out of nothing. When a man makes a thing from material which is his own, then we say that the object which he makes is his property. If a man buys stone or bricks and builds a house, then certainly the house is his. But God is more than a maker, He is a Creator, that is one Who has by His Infinite Power, produced and created all things out of nothing, and we are not then merely His servants, but His absolute property. If a servant cannot dictate to his earthly master, surely then we cannot dictate to God, what we will do or not do, without being arrogant, and if disobedient being punished for our disobedience. We are God's creatures, He is not only our Master, but our Supreme Lord and Ruler. His place then is to command, ours to obey. Therefore, since He has made us for a purpose, it is only right and proper, that He should tell us what this purpose is. Has He done so? Yes, this He has done most fully and entirely through the Sacred Scriptures or Writings. These were written by holy men under the guidance, direction, and Inspiration of God. He prompted these holy men to write them. He suggested to their minds what truths

they were to write; and He preserved them from all error and mistakes in what they wrote. These Writings are then called, as they truly are, the "Word of God." God is their principal Author, and those holy writers were but instruments in the hands of God, just as the pen in the hand of a man. The pen moved by the hand writes letters and forms words, but it is the mind of man that moves or directs the hand, and hence it is styled the writing of man. But in writing the Sacred Scriptures God prompted, directed, inspired, and guarded from error, the minds of these men. Therefore the Sacred Scriptures are His Word. They are divided into two parts, the Old and New Testament. The former contains the revelations which God made of Himself and the duties of man to Him, from the creation of the world till the appearance of Christ, His Son. The latter contains the record of Christ's life, a description of the Church which He founded, and examples of the teaching of his Apostles and disciples. We see then from the very existence of these Holy Writings, that God has revealed the purpose for which He made man. The very first man and woman created, our first parents, received a command from God (Gen. ii. 17). From the very first then, man was favoured by various revelations, of the presence, and of the will, and commands of God. And through the early ages of the world, there were always families to whom God kept re-

vealing His holy will. Now it was to Noah, now to Abraham, then to Jacob, next to Isaac and so on generation after generation (Gen. xii. xxvi. xxviii. xlix). Later on, when the children of Israel or Jacob, were mighty in number but were slaves to the Egyptians, God gave them a great leader in the person of Moses, and through him, God delivered them, brought them out to Mount Sinai, gave them the Ten Commandments, and agreed with them that as long as they faithfully kept these Commandments and obeyed Him, they would be His people, and He would be their God (Lev. xxvi. 12). This Moses wrote part of the Old Testament; he wrote the "Book of Genesis," which contains the history of the Creation, and the world's progress for over two thousand years. The "Book of Exodus" which records the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. He also wrote the "Book of Leviticus" in which God fully describes and points out, the various rites, ceremonies, and offices which the Priests and Levites are to use in His service. Moses wrote also the "Book of Numbers," and the "Book of Deuteronomy." In the latter he repeats the Commandments which God gave on Sinai, and other precepts not expressed before. This Book was written when the world had existed about two thousand five hundred and fifty years.

But when our first parents, Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command in Paradise, God promised

them a Redeemer. The wily serpent, the most subtile of all beasts, suggested to the woman Eve, that she and Adam should eat of a certain tree, although God had forbidden them to do so. She acted as the serpent wished, Adam followed her example, and when God called upon Adam to account for his sin, he said the woman had given him the fruit and the woman then answered that the serpent deceived her. God then decreed to banish them from Paradise, and cursing the serpent said: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel (Gen. iii.). Thus God promised a Redeemer Who would be born of woman, and this Redeemer would crush the serpent, the devil, who tempted men. The Jews therefore continually lived in expectation of the coming Redeemer or Messiah. The Prophets continually spoke of Him, Jeremias and Isaias gave an outline of His future life; Daniel foretold the time of His birth, and Micheas, the place where He would be born. Thus the Jews had fixed the very time for the coming of the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God; and at the appointed time, the Son of God was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He lived on earth thirty three years, and preached to men, and told them the purpose why God had made them.

3. And He founded a Church to teach all men, why He made them.—When Christ came

upon earth, He gave distinct proofs that He was the Messiah, the Redeemer expected by the people, and foretold and promised by the Eternal Father. This He did by the surpassing purity of His life, by the evident holiness of His doctrines; by His many stupendous miracles, and by the fulfilment of the many ancient prophecies concerning Him. He taught as one having authority, for the Scripture says that the people admired Him; "For He was teaching them as one having power, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees" (St. Matt. vii. 29). He taught too as one sent from God: "As the Father hath sent Me," He said to His Apostles, "I also send you" (St. John xx. 21); and He also taught as the Son of God. "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though you will not believe Me, believe the works; that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father" (St. John x. 37-38). He explained the Old Testament, He gave out anew all the truths it contained. He also revealed and explained, many hitherto unknown facts about God and His perfections, about God's will, and what pleased Him, and what offended Him. He raised the dead to life (St. Luke vii.), He cleansed the lepers (St. Luke xvii.), He cured the sick (St. John iv.), He healed the diseased (St. Luke xiv.), gave speech to the dumb (St. Mark vii.), sight to the blind (St. Luke xviii.); and by many other kinds of

miracles and wonders, did He prove to men that He was the Son of God, was God Himself. But it was not His Divine Will to remain physically present in this world for ever. So when the Jews had put Him to death on Good Friday, He raised Himself to life again on Easter Sunday, proving by this great and glorious miracle, that He was truly God. After this His Resurrection, He appeared to His Apostles and disciples eleven times during forty days, and at one time was seen by more than five hundred (1 Cor. xv. 6). During the time Christ was preaching the Gospel on earth, He often spoke of the Church which He would found, which was to teach men God's commands and how to obey them; which was to teach man the purpose for which God made him, and how he was to accomplish that purpose. He then had already selected from amongst those who believed in Him, a number of men whom He called His Apostles and disciples, and they helped Him during the three years He preached on earth. During that time He was their Head and Director, their Teacher and Master. But now after His Resurrection He spent forty days instructing them, especially for the great work which He intended to give to them, namely the conversion of the world. On the fortieth day then, just as He was about to ascend to Heaven from Mount Olivet, He said to His Apostles Who surrounded Him: "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth.

Going, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20). Already He had appointed a head or chief teacher over these Apostles, in the person of St. Peter, whom He told to confirm his brethren (St. Luke xxii. 31-32), and to whom He charged the lambs and the sheep (St. John xxi. 17). Christ then here established a body of men to go out and preach the Gospel, to go out and convert men, and tell them why God made them, and what He wishes them to do for Him. Thus did Christ found His Church, and He said that He would remain with it till the end of time, "till the consummation of the world." What does this mean? Does it mean that the Apostles were to live till the end of the world? No, their lives were of the ordinary span of years, and Christ spoke to them as officials of His Church; they would die but would be lawfully succeeded by other disciples, and Christ meant therefore that His Church would exist till the end of the world, and He would watch over It from Heaven, and protect and guide His Church and her ministers generation after generation, till the end of time. Thus then did Christ found and establish a Church, to tell man what God wished him to do.

4. And therefore we should hear that Church and obey its instructions.—Since God then has made us for a particular purpose, and we are absolutely His property, we must listen with attention to that Church which He has appointed to teach us His holy will. That Church was founded by Him, that it might show us how in every action of life we may faithfully serve Him. No matter what our position is, no matter how learned or eloquent we may be, we must become humble, obedient, and docile children of God's Church, since she now represents Him on earth. God has distinctly pointed this out to us. To the teachers of the Church He said: "He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me" (St. Luke x. 16). Again He said to the Apostles when sending them to preach; "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (St. Mark xvi. 16). These are not the words of man but the words of God. He that will remain indifferent to this Church, to the religion, which it teaches will be condemned. Man destroys the work of his hands when it does not accomplish the work for which he made it, and God acts in like manner. We say in like manner, for when man refuses to be religious, refuses to hear the Church of Christ, and by Baptism profess its doctrines and obey its in-

structions, God does not destroy man in the sense of annihilating him, but He condemns man to an eternity of misery and pain. This is indeed far worse than annihilation.

Conclusion.—We say, brethren, and say truly, that the servant should obey his master, and especially when that master is good and kind, and far more truly must we say, that we who are not merely servants but creatures, should obey most freely and fully, Our loving Father Who is Our Creator. He in His infinite love for us has made us to love and serve Him in this world, in order that we may live in bliss with Him for ever in the next world. He has appointed His Church, the Catholic Church to teach us how to love and serve Him. In that Church He has left many aids, many succours which will enable us to love and obey Him, and win the happiness of Heaven. Let us then become earnest and devoted children of that Church, and eagerly listen to what she teaches, and carry out fervently what she commands. By doing these things we shall accomplish the purpose for which God made us. Remember the words of Christ, we cannot do as we like, we cannot be indifferent to religion if we wish to be saved. Neither can we do our own will, and make a religion to suit our own fancy; for: "Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the will of my

Father Who is in Heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven."

INDIFFERENTISM IN RELIGION.

SYNOPSIS.

Indifferentism In Religion.

"Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven: but he that doth the will of My Father Who is in Heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven."—St. Matt. vii. 21.

Introduction . . Religion and the Creation.

Some Properties and Notes of Christ's Church taken from the Holy Scriptures

1. The Unity of Christ's Church.
2. Christ's prayer for Unity in His Church.
3. The work of the Holy Trinity regarding the Church.
4. St. Paul on the Unity of Christ's Church.
5. The Infallibility of Christ's Church.
6. St. Peter the Church's foundation is infallible.

Some Fallacies of the principle of Indifferentism

7. It destroys that absolute certainty required in religion.
8. It is a contradiction in itself.
9. It produces the utmost confusion.
10. It would cause men to hold the most obnoxious tenets.
11. The conversion of Cornelius destroys this principle.

Conclusion . . Christ established one true Church that is the Catholic Church. We must enter her fold.

INDIFFERENTISM IN RELIGION.

(SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST).

"Not every one that saith to Me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven: but he that doth the will of My Father who is in Heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven"—St. Matt. vii. 21.

INTRODUCTION.

Religion and the Creation.—In a former discourse, brethren, we dwelt for a time, upon the absolute indifference of many towards all religion, and we showed that there was a clear connection between the Creation and religion. For the fact of the Creation proves, that man depends upon God, not only for continual life, but also for his very being itself, and Creation is therefore a link connecting God and man. Following up these thoughts we showed, that, the very order of nature which God created, demanded that all the Creator's creatures, should assent to and hold, those truths which God has revealed, not only concerning Himself, but also concerning the end or the purpose for which He has made man. The dictates of the natural law written in our hearts, tells us, that we should listen to, honour and obey our earthly parents, and therefore much more does it tell us, that we should believe, trust, obey, and serve, Our Eternal Father, Who

has created us and given us all we have. We found that Christ, the Son of God, came down upon this earth, lived amongst us for thirty-three years, preached His Gospel, and then founded a Church, which was to teach all men till the end of the world, the purpose for which God made them, and how they were to carry out this purpose. But since the devil could not harm the Church of Christ, he has instigated, silly and wicked men, to establish other Churches, creeds, and sects, which war against each other, and teach the most conflicting and contradictory doctrines. They contradict each other, they preach against each, and assert that they are right and others wrong. How strange then is the fact, that in spite of all this, we find men who think they satisfy God by belonging to any of these sects; who say openly: that, "One religion is as good as another, therefore it does not matter which you belong to." This system of Indifference will be the theme of our present discourse; and we will show from the Holy Scriptures, that it is false, most harmful, and opposed to the will of God.

SOME PROPERTIES AND NOTES OF CHRIST'S CHURCH TAKEN FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

1. The unity of Christ's Church.—If the Holy Scriptures prove anything they prove this, that Our Lord both by His words and actions wished that

His Church should be, and was determined that it would be, a united Church. He willed that it should possess unity, and should ever be one. But unity excludes division, and a thing cannot be whole and divided at the same time into parts and shapes contrary to and against its nature. To take a thing that is by nature one and whole, and to hold it up and assert that it is one, and is whole and yet divided, is a contradiction in itself. When we say that there is only One God, we do not mean that there are two, or three Gods. We say that there are three Divine Persons in the Godhead, but this is quite a different thing to asserting that One God is three Gods. Unity here then excludes division. When therefore we say that Christ's Church is One and united we do not mean that it is divided, or split up into many contradictory divisions, or that it is divided in, and against itself. To hold this would be absurd. For God is one, Christ is one, and Truth is one; yet the Father Who is one, sent Christ Who is one to found the Church, which is to teach truth which also is one. The Church then is One in the Eternal Father, one in Her Divine Founder, one in her faith, or teaching of Truth. Thus is division foreign to the very nature and structure of Christ's Church, yet when Christ sent forth that Church to teach all nations He said: "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be

condemned" (St. Mark xvi. 16). All men therefore who wish to save their immortal souls must believe in her, that is accept and hold all she teaches, and they must receive Baptism and through it profess to be her children. Hence it is not by any means an indifferent matter, whether we belong to her or to any other religion. For why should there be another religion unless its propagators dissent from the Church of Christ and oppose her? If they do this they cannot be good, on the contrary these false religions are evil, and it is a great evil to belong to them, since we see from Christ's words it means "condemnation." To proclaim that these various conflicting, contradictory, and warring sects, are but branches of the Church of Christ, is most misleading and false. For the true branches of the parent trunk, the Church of Christ, produce the same foliage and fruit in every land; and do not produce fruits or doctrines entirely opposed to each other; such as Anglicanism, Calvanism, Methodism, Weslyanism, and such like, which contradict and war with each other. This would mean that she was divided in and against herself, and this is false, for she is united, she is one, and ever has been, and ever will be one. Therefore one religion is certainly not as good as another, since one and only one is true, and all the others false.

2. Christ's prayer for unity in His Church.—We know from the Gospel of St. John that before

His Sacred Passion Our Lord prayed to the Eternal Father for His disciples. "I pray not," He said to His Father, "that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil. They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Thy word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for them do I sanctify Myself, that they may also be sanctified in truth. And not only for them do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me. That they may all be one, as Thou Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given to them; that they may be one, as We also are one. I in them, and Thou in Me: that they may be made perfect in one; and the world may know, that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast also loved Me" (St. John xvii. 15-23). This beautiful prayer of Christ, shows us His wishes regarding the Unity of His Church. Christ asks His Father, to "sanctify," His disciples in, "truth." Then He adds: "Thy word is truth." The Word of God, is the truth, the faith which the Church teaches, and His disciples are to be sanctified, made holy in It. The Apostles are to teach the Word of God, the children are to believe it, and in and through it, all are to be

sanctified. As the Father had sent Christ to teach this Word, so Christ says He has sent forth His Apostles to teach it also. Can the Word then of the Eternal Father, Which is Truth, can it be opposed to and contradictory in Itself? Can It mean in one Church that Christ is Really Present in the Holy Eucharist, and in another Church that He is not so present? Can it teach in one Church that there is a Purgatory, and in a sect that there is no such place? It would be blasphemy to say it can. Yet it was this Word, this Truth which Christ sent His Apostles to preach, and in which they were to be "sanctified." The Apostles therefore did not teach these contradictions, they taught the Word of God, they taught Truth. We see most clearly then that these quarrelsome contradictions, and opposite doctrines which the sects hold, come from men and not from the Church of Christ, since they are opposed to it. But let us follow Christ's prayer. "That they may all be one." Here Christ distinctly shows that not only are there to be no contradictory doctrines in His Church, but it is to be one entirely and in every way without a shadow of division. "That they may all be one, as Thou Father in Me, and I in Thee." Christ now sets before us the pattern or model of the Unity which is to exist in His Church. A similar unity to that which exists in the Godhead of the Three Divine Persons. "As Thou Father in Me, and I in Thee." Who dare

assert, that there exists even the very slightest want of Unity between the Three Divine Persons of the Godhead, between Our Lord and His Eternal Father? We know that the Three Divine Persons are one in nature, essence, and operation (cf. Council of Latern A.D. 649, Can i.) They cannot be considered separable, because not one of Them, exists or does anything before, or after, or without the other, as they are inseparable in all that They are, and in all that They do (cf. Eleventh Council of Toledo's, Creed of Faith, Apud Denzinger 227). There is only one and the same intellect, one and the same will, in the Trinity of the Three Divine Persons. Hence they are inseparable, they cannot be otherwise than united. Yet this is the Model of the Unity which Christ will have in His Church, unity of intellect, unity of will, unity of operation; the children of His Church were then to be united in their intellects by believing and understanding one true faith, and united in their wills by professing and obeying it. The results of this Unity Christ also shows. "That they may be one, as We are also one, I in them, and Thou in Me; that they may be made perfect in one." The result of this perfect unity, or oneness, is the friendship which springs up and unites us heart and soul to Our Lord, and His Eternal Father. But there is one most remarkable sentence in Our Lord's prayer to His Father. He repeats it twice almost in the same words. The

burden of His prayer is for perfect unity in His Church, and He asks this Unity, that the World may know that the Father has sent Him. "That the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." The Unity then of His Church is to be a sign, that His Father sent Him from Heaven to found it, or in other words, the Church that has perfect unity, has a sign upon it that it is Christ's. And it also means that when men want to find the Church of God, they must look for a Church that is so united, a Church that cannot from its very nature allow divisions, separations and new creeds; a church that does not in any way favour division nor a multiplicity of sects and creeds, nor any opinion that supports or upholds them as Indifferentism does. For she knows well, that all other religions outside herself must be false, and therefore it is entirely wrong to belong to any of them. She has the words of our Divine Founder ringing in her ears; "He that believeth not shall be condemned." That the prayer of Christ for Unity was heard we may not doubt, for He only prayed for what He willed, and He was God, and what God wills must be accomplished. Therefore the Church of Christ must have and cannot be without this Unity.

3. The work of the Holy Trinity regarding the Church.—Twice in His prayer Christ speaks of the Father sending Him, and He also says that He sends forth His Apostles. After His Resur-

rection He said to the Apostles: "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you" (St. John xx. 21): and again: "All power is given to me, in Heaven and in earth" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18). In another place He tells His Apostles why He calls them friends." I have called you friends; because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you" (St. John xv. 15). From these texts we see that the Father sent Christ to preach the Gospel, and found His Church, and He therefore instructs the Apostles in all that He has heard of His Father, and the Apostles are to make all these things known to the children of his Church.

Next let us note, with what care and zeal did Our Lord instruct the Apostles in "all the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven" (St. Matt. xiii. 11). Then when He sends them forth He says; "Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 19-20). Thus He sends forth the Apostles to preach all things whatsoever they have heard from Him and He has commanded, and He promises them His effectual assistance and His continual protection, till time is no more.

In His discourse at the Last Supper, Christ promised that the Father would send, "another Paraclete" (St. John xiv. 16), and He describes this Paraclete as being "the Spirit of Truth," Who will teach them all truth, and abide with them for ever, and recall all things to their minds that He had taught them (St. John xiv. 26; xvi. 13). The Holy Ghost the Spirit of Truth descended upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, and the Apostles fortified, began their great work of preaching the Gospel, and, in that day there were added to the Church about three thousand souls (Acts ii. 4). But this work was to go on for ever. The Apostles would die, but others called by God would take their place (cf. Acts i. vi.), and these in turn would be succeeded by others, and so it would be, generation after generation till the end of time. Christ would ever be with these Apostles, protecting and helping them, and the Spirit of Truth would ever be teaching them all truth. The Eternal Father then sent His Son to preach His word, Which is Truth; Christ Who is also Truth made known the Words of His Father to His Apostles, and through them to all the children of His Church; and the Holy Ghost the "Spirit of Truth" teaches the Church all Truth, and recalls to its mind "all things whatsoever which Christ had commanded it. Can these Three Divine Persons teach the children of the Church, contradictory,

opposite, and false doctrines? No indeed that is utterly impossible since these Three Divine Persons form the Godhead, and God cannot deceive nor be deceived.

God then has founded one, united Church, and hath sent it forth to teach all nations, to preach the Gospel to every creature; it teaches the truths of God, it was founded by Christ and He is still with it, and the Spirit of Truth dwelleth in it and teaches all truth to its children. All men are bound therefore to obey it, all are bound to believe it and enter its fold. "He that believeth not shall be condemned." This one Church or religion of God only is good, all the others so-called are false, therefore one religion is not as good as another, and hence Indifferentism is wrong and opposed to the things which God would have us do.

4. St. Paul on the Church's Unity.—St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, exhorts the Ephesians, to be careful to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. And writing to the Galatians, he blames them for allowing themselves to be imposed upon by false teachers. He rebukes them for listening to those who would pervert them and says: "But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which you have received, let him be anathema" (Gal. i. 8). The Apostle then goes on to tell these people that the Gospel which he has preached to them is not

his own but that which God revealed to him. In his Epistle to Titus he tells him to rebuke sharply those who attempt to teach false doctrines (i. 13). What would be St. Paul's word were he now to return to earth, and behold how indifferent men were to the Gospel which he and the other Apostles preached? What words would he utter to the many false teachers of our day, what would he say to those men who tell us that one religion is as good as another, and that it did not matter to which we belonged? Surely his words, would be more powerful, more emphatic, than even those to the Galatians.

5. The Infallibility of Christ's Church.—The voice of Christ's Church is the voice of Christ Himself, and it speaks with His authority. For He has said to the Pastors of the Church: "I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 20). And again: "He that heareth you heareth Me" (St. Luke x. 16) and; "As the Father hath sent Me I also send you" (St. John xx. 21). Thus do we learn that Christ is ever watching over, protecting, and guarding His Church till the end of time. Elsewhere He has told us; "That the gates of hell shall never prevail against her" (St. Matt. xvi. 18); and we might well ask how can the greatest powers of hell prevail against her, when God is with her for ever? The "Spirit of Truth" too, as we have seen, was

given to the Apostles to teach them "all truth" (St. John xiv. 17) and how can the Church in which this Spirit resides and teaches, ever teach error or falsehood? This is utterly impossible. The Church of Christ then is Infallible, that is, she cannot err in faith or morals, for she is our Infallible guide in both. All through the whole of our discourse we have seen that the Church of Christ cannot teach error, and therefore she is the Church which Our Lord has founded to teach all truth. It is then our duty, to belong to this Church of Christ, and obey it as we would Christ Himself.

6. St. Peter the Church's foundation infallible.—That the Church of Christ might be one, as Christ and the Father are one (St. John xvii. 21), Our Lord appointed St. Peter to be the First in dignity, and the Chief in authority amongst all the other Apostles, and therefore, the Centre of Unity for all the Church. This Primacy was promised to Peter, when Christ first changed his name and declared that instead of Simon he should be called Peter, which means a "Rock" (St. John i. 42); and still more clearly when Christ said: "Thou art Peter (a Rock) and upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell, shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall

be loosed also in Heaven" (St. Matt. xvi. 18-19). Again on the night He was betrayed He said to Peter. "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted confirm thy brethren" (St. Luke xxii. 31-32). These promises were fulfilled after the Resurrection when Christ said to Peter: "Feed My lambs; feed My sheep" (St. John xxi. 15-17). The word feed here means more than the English word "feed" and the Greek word used, from which it is translated means rather "rule over and shepherd" than merely "feed." So Christ really said "Rule over, be the kingly shepherd of My flock, My sheep and My lambs." Christ often calls His Church, "a fold," and the children of the Church, His, "sheep" (St. John x.), hence His words to St. Peter. When also Christ said that Satan desired to sift the Apostles He referred to them all, the devil wished to sift all of them, but Christ prayed not for them all but for Peter only, as the language of the original shows. "I have prayed for thee, Peter, and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren." Peter's faith then could never fail, for Christ's prayer must be answered, and he was therefore made infallible, and had the duty of confirming, or strengthening the faith of the other Apostles given to him. Thus, we behold Peter appointed Chief Pastor over

the whole of Christ's Church, with the duty of teaching and confirming his brethren, and ruling or feeding with the word of God, the sheep and the lambs. We also behold the fulness of power conferred upon him by Christ giving him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and we see that he is an infallible rock which supports and upholds the Church of Christ, and makes it infallible also. How then can the Church of Christ be divided in its teaching since Christ by His prayer has made the Chief Pastor of it infallible? It was in fact to prevent all division, and to preserve unity that Christ made His Vicar infallible, for this Vicar thus becomes the very Centre of Unity. Like all other properties which pertain to the Church of Christ, this Primacy, this Infallibility has been handed down to Peter's successors, the Popes of Rome, for Peter himself was the first Bishop of Rome. Infallibility does not mean that the Pope cannot sin, nor does it mean the many absurd things which prejudiced, and irreligious men say it does; it means simply this; that when the Pope as Shepherd, and Teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his Supreme Apostolic Authority defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, then he is infallible. This was the gift conferred upon Peter, through Christ's prayer, this gift has therefore come down with the office of Chief Pastor, and is therefore found in St. Peter's

successors. Such a Church then as the Church of Christ is shown by the Scriptures to be, is in its very nature and work opposed to division, and hence it contains no contradictory doctrines in itself, neither can it, nor does it acknowledge as true, the many conflicting sects and churches outside of it, for they are clearly false, and are not in any way, parts as it is asserted, nor branches of Christ's Church; and as they are false, so the principle of Indifferentism which says that "one religion is as good as another," is also false, and against the dictates of true religion entirely.

SOME FALLACIES OF THE PRINCIPLE OF INDIFFERENTISM.

7. It destroys that Absolute certainty required in religion.—A profession of religion is a most serious thing, since upon it depends our salvation or damnation. For it is by the practice of the religion taught by Christ that we can be saved, and not by the practice of another, otherwise we might become Mahometans or Budhists. But it is only by professing the true religion founded by Christ, that we can save our souls. But now when we look out into the world and see so many sects and so-called churches each with different beliefs, some are extremely doubtful as to which is the right religion or belief. We ask a Quaker how many Sacraments there are and he tells us "none." We seek out an Anglican and he says there are chiefly

two. We turn to the Quaker, and ask him if he is certain he is right and he answers that he is. We put the same question to the Anglican and he also says he is certain, he is right and the Quaker is wrong. Then we again approach the Quaker and ask if he may not, cannot possibly be mistaken. He answers, "I am certain although I am not infallible." The Anglican then says, Neither am I infallible, but still I believe and it seems to me that there "are chiefly two Sacraments." What confusion, what a want of certainty is the here. They can only give us, the mere assurance of men, no better than ourselves, a kind of certainty that is merely their opinion, which is no better than our own. No sane man will entrust the salvation of his immortal soul to a religion founded on mere opinion, and upheld by mere human certainty. We want the Divine assurance of God, we want His infallible declaration about the truths and doctrines we are to hold and profess. Then we are safe, mere men like ourselves may err and are liable to do so. We cannot trust them, we must have the assurance of Christ's Church which is infallible and cannot err.

8. It is a contradiction in itself.—Again this principle is a contradiction in itself. For why we ask are there so many sects? They came into existence only because their founders differed with the doctrines of the sect to which they formerly belonged,

and therefore, they left the old sect and formed a new one. John Wesley founded the Wesleyans about A.D. 1739. Soon other sects were formed from it, such as "Methodist New Connexion" the "Primitive Methodist," the "Wesleyan Methodists," and others. But if all religions are equally good, why did these sectaries form new sects, since according to the principle one religion is as good as another, and therefore the "Medthodist New Connexion" was quite as good as the "Primitive Methodist?" Thus the principle is really shown to be a contradiction in itself by the conduct of many who profess it. The sects preach against each other, they strive to make converts, but why this if, "one religion is as good as another?"

9. It produces the utmost confusion.—According to this principle it is as good to be a Quaker as an Anglican, a Baptist as an Anabaptist, a Methodist as a Unitarian. And according to Indifferentism its adherents may reject, and put aside any doctrine just as it suits their fancy. A man may according to them, reject now the Divinity of Christ and be a Unitarian, or the Sacraments and be a Quaker, or infant Baptism and be an Anabaptist, and so on, just as his mind directs him now to one sect, now to another. Thus the principle removes all stability in religion, and produces nothing so much as dire confusion.

10. It would cause men to hold the most

obnoxious tenets.—We know that some men have taught the most revolting doctrines, under the guise of religion, and yet this principle if followed out, would lead men to hold, and propagate such doctrines. For according to it if these tenets are held by any religious denomination whatever, it is right to hold them and teach them since "one religion is as good as another" according to them. This is one of the reasons why the sects, teach and put forth, the many contradictions and absurd doctrines which we both hear and see defended by their adherents. According to the principle of Indifferentism, one may hold any, or all of these, contradictory, irreligious, and obnoxious tenets. Such a principle then, in reality tends to the upheaval and destruction of true religion as far as it can, it is but a veil, with which the devil blindfolds men and leads them on to their ruin and destruction.

11. The Conversion of Cornelius destroys this principle.—The conversion of Cornelius, as related in the "Acts of The Apostles," flatly contradicts this principle, and thus in a sense destroys it, by showing that it is entirely wrong. Cornelius we are told was a most religious and God-fearing man, a man who gave great alms to the people, and was good to all around him. In a vision he saw an angel who told him to send to Joppe, for one Simon, surnamed Peter, and that this Peter would tell him what to do. When the angel had departed,

immediately the centurion sends for Peter, and the latter coming instructs Cornelius and then receives him into the true Church of Christ (Acts x.) Now Cornelius, although he was good, just, charitable, and God-fearing, had to change, and enter into the Church which Christ had founded. He had to go to some trouble to do this, for he had to send to Joppe for Peter, and when the latter came Cornelius had not to wrangle nor argue with St. Peter, but to listen and obey. Now if one religion is as good as another, why has Cornelius to change? And who is it that receives him into the Church? It is Peter, the rock on whom Christ built His Church, Peter for whose faith Christ prayed, Peter whom Christ had made infallible, and whom he commanded to feed the "lambs and the sheep" of His fold. The action of Cornelius itself contradicts the principle of Indifferentism, but far more strongly do the actions of the great infallible Apostle do so, when he instructs the centurion and receives him into the Church, he by doing so emphatically condemns Indifferentism. If ever the word of God proved that one religion is not as good as another, surely it does so, in the conversion of Cornelius.

Conclusion.—The infinite Wisdom, of Our Lord, brethren, caused Christ to so form His Holy Church, that she would be fortified against all the storms and tempests, that the malice of men, and the fury of hell would bring upon her. He endowed

her with those great and noble qualities which rendered her impregnable, and made her lasting and sure. He endowed her with a wonderful unity similar to that which exists in the Godhead of the Three Divine Persons, and made her infallible so that she could never err. He Himself is with her all days (St. Matt. xxviii.) the Holy Spirit is teaching her "all truth," and her infallible Pontiff whose faith can never fail, is feeding the lambs and the sheep, and confirming his brethren. The Sacred Scriptures prove then, that Christ founded one, united, infallible Church, to lead men to salvation. Where is that Church to-day? She is the Catholic Church presided over and ruled by Leo xiii, the successor of St. Peter. She speaks with the authority of Christ, and all men must listen to her and enter her pale, if they would be saved. It was Peter her first Pope that received Cornelius into the Church of Christ. She and she alone claims infallibility, She and she alone is the one true Church of God, and all other churches and so-called religions are absolutely false. She being infallible and united can have nothing to do with warring sects, or differing creeds; and therefore she and she alone is good, and other so-styled religions are not good but false, and therefore one religion cannot be as good as another. Let all then if they value their immortal souls, calmly and impartially study her, and examine her claims to be the one true

Church of Christ. It will not save us to embrace any religion but the true one, for remember Christ's words: "Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of My Father Who is in Heaven; he shall enter the kingdom of Heaven."

THE GRAND ESSENTIAL OF RELIGION.

SYNOPSIS.

The Grand Essential of Religion.

"*That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts; that being rooted and founded in charity you may be able to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height and depth.*"—Eph. iii. 17-18.

Introduction . . St. Paul and Christ on Charity.

Charity and its Effects
1. Charity a distinct mark of the true Catholic.
2. Charity makes earth like Heaven.
3. Charity is God-like.

Malice and its Effects
4. Pride and malice cause uncharitableness.
5. Without Charity there is no salvation.
6. The value of Charity at the Judgment.

Practical Charity of Christ
7. Christ our great model in Charity.
8. Christ's Charity to the adultress.
9. Christ's Charity to Peter.

Conclusion . . . Are we Charitable? What deeds have we to show this?

THE GRAND ESSENTIAL OF RELIGION.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST).

"That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts; that being rooted and founded in charity you may be able to comprehend with all the Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height and depth."—Eph. iii. 17-18.

INTRODUCTION.

St. Paul and Christ on Charity.—It is more than remarkable, my brethren, nay it is not without design, that the Apostle of the Gentiles so continually and so pointedly, dwells upon the great virtue of charity. Wherever he treats about other virtues he usually concludes with words similar to those we find in another letter, namely that all other virtues are as nothing without charity. And what is St. Paul doing but following the example of his Divine Master? Did not our Lord continually preach about the necessity of Charity? Did He not sum the whole Law and the Prophets under this head? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the Law and the Prophets." Again and again did Christ preach this doctrine of love, teaching it also by miracles, parables, and examples; showering down His love upon the sick and the poor, thus entreating us to do

the same, and as far as we can to act the good Samaritan to all men.

CHARITY AND ITS EFFECTS.

1. Charity a distinct mark of the true Catholic.—Charity is the great fundamental quality, which distinguishes the Christian from the heathen. The latter through mere natural goodness may be in some cases kind to his fellows; but it is the Heaven sent virtue of love which under every circumstance, and in every case, distinctly shows forth the true and practical Christian. Christ has said: "Love one another as I have loved you, by this shall all men know that you are my disciples" (St. John xiii. 34). And again; "Of old it was said to you, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, but I say to you, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute you." Here we have the spirit of Christ set forth, here we have Christianity expounded.

St. Paul in this morning's Epistle likens charity to a tree bearing most precious and plentiful fruit; and he prays that it may be deeply rooted in the souls of the Ephesians, so that its fruit and effects may be most abundant, and influence all their actions towards their fellow man. He was writing to those who had been heathens, but who now were converts to Christianity; and he calls upon them on account of their conversion to practise the duties of their new profession. He exhorts them now that they

have become disciples of Christ, to cast away their old sinful habits and, "put on the new man;" he sets before them a brief sketch of Christian virtues for their imitation and admonishes them to be honest truthful, and just; and concludes with these striking words: "Let all anger and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice, and be ye kind to one another, tender hearted and forgiving one another even as God hath forgiven you in Christ" (Ephes. iv. 31-32). This was to show to all men, that they were not what they had been, they were not now heathens but disciples of Christ, not alone in name but also in reality.

2. Charity makes earth like Heaven.—The Apostle's exhortations are as much needed now as they were then, for many who are Catholics in name, are but little better than heathens in their conduct. They have not put away, nor do they think of putting away, evil speaking, anger, and malice, and they are neither tender hearted nor forgiving; nay, in their hearts there is little or no charity whatever. They think and speak evil, they are envious and hateful both in language and conduct towards their fellow man. They may attend to other religious duties, they may even receive the Sacraments now and then; yet within their hearts there is a source of evil, which keeps them for months, nay even years, not alone from loving their fellow man, but from even speaking civilly to him.

Thus we have contentions, wrangling hatred and strife, which should be banished from this world, so that it might become a place of peace and happiness, instead of one full of misery and sorrow.

Religion tells us, that we were all created to enjoy eternal bliss in Heaven. It declares that in Paradise there is rest and peace, harmony and concord, and all is brought about and perpetuated, through a holy and blessed love. And does not religion demand, that we do our very utmost here on earth, by our charity and affection towards one another, to make this life but a picture, a beginning of our everlasting life? If we did what religion tells us would not this earth be like Heaven, if our love were as strong and as universal as God wishes it to be? In fact this quality of love makes us fit to enter Heaven, and destined one day to love each other with a wondrous continual love in the next world, we should indeed do so likewise in this. This Our Lord unceasingly recommends, this He continually preaches. He most distinctly points out and shows, that charity is the great essential virtue of the true Christian's life.

3. **Charity is God-like.**—Charity comes from God the Father of mercies and God of all consolation and therefore is like to Him. He created us that He might share His happiness with us. When we love others we rejoice when they rejoice, we mourn when they mourn, Christ wept over Lazarus.

When we love our fellow men we forgive them should they offend us, and has not Christ forgiven our offences over and over again? The poor, the sick, and the lame, are dear to us through charity, and those who are really the children of God, must perform the works which charity dictates. It must be stamped upon their thoughts, words, and actions, just as it was stamped upon every deed of Our Lord's life. Never forget, that; "God is charity, and he that abideth in charity abideth in God" 1 St. John iv. 16.

MALICE AND ITS EFFECTS.

4. Pride and malice cause uncharitableness.—On the other hand, malice with all its accompanying evils springs from pride. Pride is the fundamental vice of the human heart, and because it is selfish, and would have all things for itself, it ever seeks revenge when an injury is done us; it detests excellence in others, and seeks to cry down their virtues and make capital out of their failings. Thus malice is built upon pride, and it becomes the parent of many other kindred vices. The author of malice is the devil. He was proud and envied God His greatness. He would exalt his throne above the stars, but that very instant God hurled him into hell; and on Satan's pride there arose that diabolical hatred and malice towards God, and against God's children who would occupy the thrones from which he and the rebel angels had

fallen. When men hate their fellows do they not envy them their fortune, their greatness and success. The devil injured our first parents and does all he can to make us lose Heaven; hateful men do all in their power to scandalise, malign, calumniate, and injure others. The devil is a liar, the father of lies, and his agents do not stop at the most atrocious and malicious lies if they can injure others by them. Malice then is but a distinguishing mark of the devil, and if this vice and the evils which spring from it be found in the lives of Catholics, if they do the devil's works, whose children can they be but his? Do not pride and malice, hatred and envy, bring about then, the utter want of charity, the utter absence of that love which points us out to the world as the disciples of Christ? This effect is serious enough indeed, were there none others to be considered.

5. Without Charity there is no salvation.—But the Apostle and Christ do not simply exhort us to be charitable, for they distinctly tell us that unless we are so, we cannot save our souls. We promised at the moment of Baptism, to renounce the devil and all his works, and that promise must be kept. We must withstand his onslaughts, resist his temptations, subdue our passions, and be charitable if we wish to enter Heaven. God's law is most clear and emphatic on this point, and in order that we may remember it, He has told us the his-

tory of the wicked servant. This servant owes his lord and master the heavy debt of ten thousand talents, and when the master demands the debt the servant pleads for time, and not only is time given him, but the master forgives him the debt altogether. Going out this man meets with a fellow servant who owes him the small sum of one hundred pence, and laying hold of him he throttles him and will not listen to his prayer, but casts him into prison till the debt is paid. What a difference there is here between the lord and the servant. The master forgives, the servant will not. The lord asks for his money in a proper manner, the servant demands his with violence. Yet the one was a great debt, and the other small in comparison. We are not surprised to hear that the master calls the wicked servant back, rebukes him most severely, and then delivers him to the torturers till the debt is paid (St. Matt. xviii. 23-35). Were we in the master's place would we not have done the same? Do not our hearts tell us, that this wicked man should have forgiven his fellow servant after the master had forgiven him? Yes, truly our hearts tell us this, and we see this wicked man punished for his unkindness to his fellow-man. Christ concludes the parable with these significant words: "So also shall my Heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from his heart" (St. Matt. xviii. 35). Distinctly then does Christ say, that Our Heavenly

Father will not forgive us our sins, unless we are charitable towards our fellow men, and forgive them their offences against us; and if God will not forgive us our sins without charity towards others, how can we save our souls without it?

And beyond this Our Lord has endeavoured to bring this daily before our minds. In that most beautiful prayer the Our Father, which we should recite morning and evening at least, Christ has taught us to say; "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." Behold then the condition here, we actually ask God to forgive us, provided we forgive others. How distinctly is the law of charity, the law of love and forgiveness, bound up in these holy words. Think of this, ponder over it when you utter them, and you will soon realise that without charity you are nothing.

6. The value of Charity at the Judgment.—Yet, more pointed and terrible are the words which our Lord will address to many, at the awful moment of Judgment. Turning to the uncharitable He will say to them; "I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat; thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink; naked, and you clothed Me not." When they ask, "When did we see thee, Lord," then Christ will tell them that they saw Him in their brethren, their neighbours. "Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it not to these My brethren, you did it not to Me" (St. Matt. xxv. 45). Thus does God at this

terrible moment, seem almost to take more notice of our offences against our fellow-man than of those against Himself, showing therefore, how much He values the great virtue of charity. Imagine then, that you are at this moment before your Eternal Judge, waiting for the sentence to be passed, that will decide your doom for ever. What will become of you, whose hearts are full of rash, cruel, and angry thoughts concerning your neighbour? What do you expect who are ever hurling, hot, angry words at your fellow-man, and even sometimes give him blows? And you who seem to have nothing to do in the world but watch your neighbour, and injure him by your calumny, detraction and lies, do you think you will be saved? And the many of you that have no pity for the poor, the lame and the suffering, you whose hearts are full of pride and selfishness, do you expect the sentence of the Blessed? Do not delude yourselves, if you are such in life, and continue so and die in this state, then your own mind, and the word of God most distinctly tell you, that your sentence will be that of the damned. "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire" (St. Matt. xxv. 41). Examine your hearts then and your conduct in this matter, lest death which comes as a thief come soon, and be for you but an entrance, a beginning of that eternal death in hell.

THE PRACTICAL CHARITY OF CHRIST.

7. Christ our great model in Charity.—The

Apostle puts before us the Charity of Christ as a model for our imitation, and he does but what Our Lord Himself did. "I have given you an example, that as I have done, so do you also" (St. John. xiii. 15). Of what has Christ given us an example? Of a profound humility, of a temper full of loving kindness and tenderness of heart; meek and gentle as He was, when reviled He did not revile, when He suffered He threatened not, but was led like a lamb to the slaughter. His whole life was but one long act of sorrow, since He had to endure and bear with the ingratitude, malice, and contradiction of sinners; yet what malice, what hatred did He bear them? None whatever, for though He detested their sins, yet He loved these erring children; and His life was at their service, was spent in doing them good, in pouring out Heaven's choicest gifts upon them. The poor, the sick and the wretched always found a friend in Him; still on all sides, He met with nothing but baseness and cruelty. Did this dry up the well springs of His wondrous love? No, it only seemed to make them more copious, to make that love more wondrous still, till at last it nailed Him to the gibbet of the Cross. Here is our example, our model; thus must we love others if we are His, for He has said; "Love one another as I have loved you." (St. John. xiii. 34).

8. Christ's Charity to the Adulteress.—But let us descend from theory and come to practice,

and study some of the many wonderful examples which Christ has given us, examples which bear on our own daily life, and fit in with circumstances which occur often. St. John tells us (chap. viii), that a poor woman was once taken in sin, and the Scribes and Pharisees bring her before Our Lord to see what sentence should be passed upon her. "Master, Moses commanded such a one to be stoned, but what sayest thou?" Again they demand an answer and Christ looking at them says; "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Surely that poor woman's moments are few now, for out of that band of Pharisees, the so-called holy men, there will be many without sin. But no, they throw no stones, there is none without sin, they steal away, and soon there is but the woman and Our Lord left. Does He condemn her? No, indeed. "Woman," He says "hath no man condemned thee?" And she answers, "No man Lord." Christ replies; "Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more." Here there is no scolding, no unbearable conditions to forgiveness, but simply, "go, sin no more." The Pharisees cared nothing about the woman's sin for they were sinners themselves, but as the Gospel says, they wished to entrap Our Lord in His speech. They caught the poor creature and they at once drag her out before the people who are with Our Lord, thus making her sin public, whilst

they hide their own enormous crimes by their pretence of holiness, yet behold how Christ treats them and the woman. What a reproach, what a rebuke is this conduct of Our Lord, to you who enter your neighbours' homes to find out their faults; what a severe and terrible condemnation for you, whose sole topic of conversation seems to be the sins of your fellow-man. What a lesson for you who cannot meet in the streets without revealing the hidden faults of others, dragging them thus into public, tearing their character into tatters, and stoning them by your calumny, detraction, and slander. This poor woman had really offended Christ, Who was her God, but how often is it that your neighbour's sins have nothing to do with you, since they are not offences against you. Still you reveal their faults, still you make their small faults great and hideous in the eyes of the world, by your lies and gossip; whilst your own souls are full of, and blackened with, enormous crimes. Well may the words of Christ to the Pharisees be applied to you; "you are of your father the devil" (St. John viii. 44). Study then the conduct of Christ here, it is practical and touches matters that occur very often in your own life, it touches your gossiping, your tattling, and tells you not to do so; but to pity other people who being weak fall; and above all it tells you to mind, not so much the sins of others, but to notice and get free from your own sins. At

no time, but especially when in sin yourself, should you be occupied about the faults of your neighbour. "Let him that is without sin among you cast first a stone at her.

9. Christ's Charity to Peter.—Again let us follow Christ into the court of Caiphas. Behold His sufferings, think of His pain; yet what is that which He hears, and which seems to cause Him greater suffering than anything else? It is Peter cursing and swearing that he knows Him not. How cruel to be denied at such a moment, and by whom? By His own chosen one, the Prince of the Apostles, the one who was His to be His Vicar. Will not He punish Peter at once, and severely for such a sin? No, He is led through the hall, and as He passes the Apostle He looks into his eyes. Was there hate or revenge in that look? Indeed no, ask Peter and he will tell you that it is full of ineffable, tender love. It melts the poor fallen Apostle's heart, and he rushes out from the hall, and weeps as though that very heart would break. How different our own conduct, even with those who have not offended us, with those whom our whims and fancies cause us to dislike. Do we meet them? Yes, again and again, and our whole manner is full of defiance our face full of contempt. The malice of our souls glares out of our very eyes, and twists and contorts onr features; and we pass them tossing our heads, with our minds full of bitter, devilish

thoughts. And if they are our superiors, much less inferiors, what dignity we put on, what contempt and disregard in our whole conduct. Oh, the hellish pride that makes us act thus! How differently did Our Lord act? He truly was offended, yet He forgives at once. He meets the poor sinner and His look converts him. He the God of Heaven and earth, quickly, freely and most lovingly, pardons His poor fallen creature. Will not this example fit in with the circumstances of our daily life? How often do those around us, those who live with us, those who are dear to us, either offend us or seem to do so, and can we not then copy Our Lord's example, and do as He did? We must if we wish to save our souls, if we wish the same God to forgive us our sins against Him.

Conclusion.—Brethren, such is the great virtue of Charity, which Christ and the Apostles wish to be deeply rooted in our souls. This is the great quality which not in name only but in reality, distinguishes you from the heathen, and without which you cannot save your souls. Examine your hearts then, and see if they contain even the semblance of this virtue. But be not deceived, do not take sentiment for the reality, but seek for practical deeds to prove that Charity reigns in your souls. Do you watch your neighbours, talk about their faults to others, and slander them when you can? If you do these things, then charity is not in you.

But if you have put away all malice, all anger and evil speaking, and are tender hearted, merciful and forgiving like your Lord; if you are sure that you have spoken kindly to, and treated with love those who have offended you, then you may have some assurance that you are a disciple of Christ, not alone in name but in reality; that you have that Charity which St. Paul speaks of when he says: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that being rooted and founded in Charity, you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length height and depth."

THE MEN WHO REFUSED THEIR KING'S INVITATION.

Q

SYNOPSIS.

The Men Who Refused Their King's Invitation.

"The kingdom of Heaven is likened to a King, who made a marriage for his son. And he sent his servants to call them that were invited to the marriage; and they would not come."—St. Matt. xxii. 2-3.

Introduction . . The invitation unheeded.

We are Invited to a Great Feast to-day
1. The invitation sent to us.
2. The invitation unheeded.
3. We treat the Ambassadors of God with contempt.
4. We crucify Christ again.

Some of the Various Excuses we make
5. Stress of business.
6. Stress of labour.
7. Attendance on family.

The Presumptuous Pharisee at the Marriage Feast
8. Religion has no root in his heart.
9. The King's quick perception.

Conclusion . . What answer have we given? We must change our lives.

THE MEN WHO REFUSED THEIR KING'S INVITATION.

(NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST).

"The kingdom of Heaven is likened to a King, who made a marriage for his son. And he sent his servants to call them that were invited to the to the marriage; and they would not come."—St. Matt. xxii. 2-3.

INTRODUCTION.

The invitation unheeded.—The parables of Our Lord, my brethren, are brimful of instructions, but there is none more pointed than that which is read in the Gospel of this morning. A great King, makes a marriage feast for his son, and he sends out his servants to call in those who were invited, but they make various excuses and will not come. St. Luke, tells us in another place (xiv), what these excuses were. One had bought a piece of ground, and he wanted to go and see it ; another had purchased five yoke of oxen and he must go and try them ; whilst the third had married a wife, and therefore could not come. Thus did many excuse themselves, and when the servants were sent out again and again, others laid hands upon them, treated them cruelly, and some put them to death. Need we wonder that the King became angry at this, that he sent his army and burnt these wretched

murderers' city? What had he done to them to merit such treatment at their hands, as the murder of his servants? Why were they so cruel when he lovingly offered them an invitation to his son's marriage? Some indeed did come; but amongst that number there was one who disgraced the feast, because he came without a wedding garment, and the King had him cast out from the bright room, into complete and utter darkness.

WE ARE INVITED TO A GREAT FEAST TO-DAY.

1. The invitation sent to us.—Do such things happen now? Does any king make such a feast and send out such invitations in our day? Surely none would excuse themselves, and none would dare to go without the wedding garment, much less murder those who came to invite them. Yes, most assuredly such an invitation is sent out daily, and there are foolish people continually unheeding the call. The great King mentioned in this parable is God, the marriage feast is a good and holy life, and the servants of the King are many; good thoughts and inspirations, good books, good example, conscience, and the priests of God. Those who excuse themselves are Catholics, who in spite of all lead a wicked life, and who by mortal sins murder their own souls, and crucify Christ again, making a mockery of Him. No one can for a moment doubt about the marriage feast being ready. In our own

inner souls, in the lone moments of life, when the things of this world are forgotten, the ideal life of a good holy Catholic is often before our mind, and far beyond it we see what such a life leads to; namely the eternal feast of bliss in Heaven. At such moments as these, are we not enraptured with the beautiful thought of leading such a life, do we not seem to drink in the happiness of Heaven, even by thinking of its greatness whilst on earth? When the king sent out his servants, he told those invited that his beeves and fatlings were killed, that all things were ready, the arrangements complete. And what is wanting to complete the continual and never-ending feast of bliss which awaits us in Paradise? Nothing indeed, and even the thought of a holy life in this world, the way that leads to the eternal feast, Christ has termed sweet and light. "For My yoke is sweet, and My burden light" (St. Matt. xi. 30.) These words are the words of God Who is Truth Itself, and they experience this assurance, who take up Our Lord's yoke, namely a good life, in the right spirit. And of Heaven, St. Paul asserts: "That the human heart cannot conceive the joys that God has prepared for those who love Him. "Perfectly well then do we know all this, sometimes we ponder over it, and then thoughts come to us such as this. "How good and kind God must be, to even think of a poor worm like me, much less to make Heaven so full of bliss, of peace, and happiness for me!"

2. The invitation unheeded.—But alas, our thoughts as a rule stop there. They are only thoughts, and rarely become actual deeds. We think and theorise, but we seldom reduce our thoughts to practice. And yet day after day, countless times, the servants of the King come and invite us to the marriage feast, to a good and holy life, but we scarcely listen to them. Conscience speaks but we heed it not, good books show us the way to holiness but we walk in other paths; the example of others is before us, but we criticise or mock them. There is Holy Mass every morning in the Church, but we are absent, prayers at night but we do not go to them. The priest waits in the Confessional but we seldom approach him, Our God is carried to the Altar rails, to be dispensed to the faithful in Holy Communion, but we very rarely receive Him. And what of home and daily life? Are our prayers said well and regularly? No. Our children trained up as they should be? No. Is the home a place of peace and happiness? My God, no; it is a place where we drink, where we tell lies, where we are angry, curse, blaspheme and slander others, it is a veritable hell. And conscience, that messenger of God which is ever with us, calls continually, calls almost every hour and begs us to change all this, to enter the path which will lead to the eternal feast; it calls upon us to be men and women of prayer, sobriety, justice and Charity, and to go to Con-

fession and Holy Communion often. We listen in a sort of way, but we soon turn away, and give our full and entire attention to the calls which the flesh, the world, and the devil make upon us. We listen to them and their messengers, and so loud is their cry, that it very often drowns the voice of conscience altogether.

3. We treat the Ambassadors of God with contempt.—Then comes the special Ambassador of Christ, the priest, whom we know is sent direct by God, and with the authority of God, but alas, he meets with worse treatment than the other servants of the Most High. There are many who treat the priest as the Scribes and Pharisees treated Our Lord. Christ told His Apostles that men would hate and persecute them, and that the hour would come, when those who put them to death would think they were doing a service to God. And this because they were Christ's Ambassadors and ministers. And is not this the reason why priests are to-day, treated with contempt and ridicule even by Catholics. The priest whether, in the pulpit, at the Altar, in the street, or in your homes, is the servant, the minister of the King of Heaven and earth. You profess to believe this, you acknowledge it to be so, yet what is your conduct, what is your answer when this servant of God calls you to the marriage feast, to a holy and edifying life? Often you strive to get away so that you may not

hear him, sometimes you are even insolent, at other times you make promises to him which you have no intention of keeping. You promise to pray often, but you seldom bend your knees; you will keep from drink you say, but in a day or two more you are drunk. "Yes," on Sunday you will go to Holy Mass, but on that morning you go elsewhere. You tell him that you will indeed approach the Holy Sacraments, but you do not do so. Very often the priest comes but it seems no use, you do not heed his calls, nor pay attention to his wishes. But at times you go further, you criticise his sermons, his conduct, you are even insolent to him. Ah, if the great King was angry when the people treated his servants contumeliously, do you think God will not be displeased at the manner in which you have treated His Ambassadors, His priests? On the last day, that dread Day of Judgment, you will most surely be called to a serious account for this.

4. We crucify Christ again.—But those who were called to the marriage did not stop when they had treated the servants contemptuously, they even went so far as to put them to death. No doubt we blame them very much for doing so, and profess to be shocked at their conduct. And yet, after we have refused to listen to the messengers of God, we slay one who is far greater than any messenger or servant, we crucify Christ the Son of God

Himself. Has not our Lord countless times directed and sent various messengers to us, and we have taken no heed of them? Has He not knocked Himself at our hearts, especially in the moment of temptation, and we have not only not listened to Him, but we have actually turned away and committed mortal sin. Thus as we are told in the Sacred Scriptures, we have, "Crucified again the Son of God making a mockery of Him." Could contempt, ingratitude, or wickedness do more? No, and unless indeed before death, we have gone to Him and implored His forgiveness, He will then hurl us not into a burning city, but into the pit of hell.

SOME OF THE VARIOUS EXCUSES WE MAKE.

5. Stress of business.—Let us look now at some of the excuses which St. Luke (xiv.) mentions. One man had bought a piece of ground and he must go and see it. Thus it happens, that men who are successful in this world and have some of its riches, often let the pursuit of business and of riches, hinder them from attending to their souls. And not alone do the wealthy do this, but even those who have only gained a little of this world's goods. The man in the Gospel had only bought one piece of ground, yet that kept him away from the feast. When a man gets covetous and greedy of this world's goods, does he not often make the same kind of excuse? True, he does not say so much in

words, but he does say by his actions, that he cannot, and will not, attend to the calls of God and the affairs of his soul. He is sometimes at Holy Mass, but seldom or ever approaches the Sacraments, he rarely prays, and religion altogether, holds a very secondary place in his mind. When you know him, you will find that his greed for riches, has caused him to be unjust, uncharitable, and a liar, and he stays away from the Sacraments because if he approached he would have to change this. Because he has some of this world's goods, his one great desire is to get more and more, no matter how. He has no room for God in his thoughts, for what ought to come first. How foolish such conduct, when Christ calls, we must leave all and go.

6. Stress of labour.—The second man excused himself, because he had to go and try his oxen. Doubtless he was an industrious man, and at another time this would have been quite right, but it was not so now when he was called to the marriage feast. Business however urgent, must never stand in the way of our souls salvation. Business men may be quite honest, their labour honestly conducted, and their difficulties many and great, and there is no fault in being labouring men, nor business men, but they must never let either keep them from attending to their religion, from going to the marriage feast. Their first great business or labour, nay, their only business in this world, is to strive as much as ever

they possibly can to save their souls. This they must ever try to do, for they were sent into the world for this very purpose. "Business must be attended," they say, "and work must be done." Yes, but the business of this world must not be put before the business of salvation, before the work that gains Heaven. The soul must be cared for, the Sacraments received, prayers must be said, time must be found for piety, or success will end in this world, and such men will be undone for ever.

7. Attendance on a family.—The third man had married a wife and therefore could not come to the feast. Family reasons are often given as a reason for not attending to religious duties. In almost every parish you find parents who give such excuses. There are mothers who pretend that they have so much to do that they cannot go to Church, and you seldom see them there, but they have plenty of time to gossip and to go to places of amusement. They say they cannot leave their children, but where do they leave them on such occasions as these? If a mother can leave her children to go and gossip, to go and visit her friends, or to go shopping, she can just as well leave them to go to Holy Mass, and to receive the Sacraments. This lame excuse is not sufficient for staying away, and the fact of it is she will not, and therefore she says she cannot. If she cannot really leave the children where is the father? In most churches, there is

more than one Holy Mass on Sunday, and the mother can go to one whilst the father minds the children, and when she returns he can go to another. Such a woman, usually has no time for prayer, no time for going to Confession. In fact she has no time when she has to attend to any religious duty, but she has an abundance of time, to spend on anything that is worldly; then she has time to go anywhere and do anything. Even were her excuse to deceive the priest, it will not, and cannot, deceive God. Then there is the excuse about dress. There is the father mother and children to support, and they have not the means to purchase fine dresses. In the first case, if a child is decently dressed it is well, and the dress good enough to hear Holy Mass in, and to attend Sunday School. It is altogether wrong, to make a child think he must be grandly dressed to go to Church, for he will get proud soon enough. Then the parents themselves, because they are not grandly dressed they will not come to Church nor approach the Sacraments; yet others do come in poor yet clean clothes, and what better are those who require such grand dresses than other people? Christ was poor so they may be, but let them also remember, that, if their clothes keep them out of the Church, they will most likely keep them out of Heaven. If you keep your eyes open, perhaps you will find out the reason why these people are so poor and in want of dress. At certain times, even

on the Sunday, you will see that these fathers and mothers are not ashamed of their children's clothes, when they want them to go to the drink shop, nor is the mother ashamed of hers when she goes there herself. And how many parents like these, in one or two week ends, will spend in the drink shop, what would have bought a pair of good boots or a little suit of clothes, and yet, when on Monday or Tuesday the priest calls to see why the children were not at Church on Sunday, the mother will answer: "Father the children have no clothes." Ah, they may put the priest off in this way, but such an answer will not satisfy the great King, God Himself at the last day.

THE PRESUMPTUOUS PHARISEE AT THE MARRIAGE FEAST.

8. Religion has really no root in his heart.—The king when he goes in to see the guest finds one there without a wedding garment, and by orders of the king he is quickly cast out. This man represents the Catholic, who is one in name but not in heart. He takes his place amongst good Catholics and passes for such himself. With a long serious face, he attends the house of God, and you may see him at Holy Mass, at Benediction, he now and then receives the Sacraments; he may even say some prayers now and then, but here all his piety ends. Such a man's religion is in his head, but not his heart. His religion is all outward show; there is

little charity in his heart, but any number of evil thoughts and rash judgments; he is neither mild nor gentle, but full of anger and revenge; he hates to hear his own faults mentioned, but he continually talks about those of others; his religion is rather a matter of business, or social standing with him, than a duty which is the outcome of his love for, and obedience to God. He likes to be thought good, to appear good, because it pleases his vanity, and perhaps helps him on in his worldly affairs. So he does not refuse distinctly to go to the marriage feast, but goes and presumes that he can mingle with the guests.

9. **The King's quick preception.**—Notice how quickly the king perceives and detects such a man, the man without the wedding garment, without true holiness in his heart. Perhaps this man had deceived the servants and had so gained admittance, but he cannot deceive the King, their master. These Pharisees may deceive men but they cannot deceive God, Whose eye is upon such people all along. He knows the true from the false, He quickly distinguishes the real Catholic from the nominal one. He allows them to appear amongst those who have rightly and properly accepted the invitation to the marriage feast, He lets the tares grow up with the wheat; but there will come a day, when He will send His servants to weed them out, and cast them from Him. There is only one such

person mentioned at the marriage feast, but in reality there are many in the world. They dress and appear in Church for the sake of respectability, but how is their soul clothed? Have they humility, charity, or honesty in their hearts? No, they are full of their own importance and greatness, they are often rude, unkind and criticise those who are their superiors; they are severe, harsh, unjust, and unkind to those with whom they come in contact. In fine they have not the wedding garment, that is innocence of soul, and on the great Judgment Day, when Christ will come to take an account of, to see the guests, such persons will be cast out into exterior darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, in other words, they will be cast into hell itself.

Conclusion.—What answer, brethren, have you given to the servants of the king, when they have invited you to the marriage feast, when they have asked you to lead a good and a holy life? Are you leading a good holy and saintly life; are you men and women of continual prayer, men and women who attend faithfully to the duties of your state of life, who approach the Sacraments often, who love and help everyone as far as you can? Remember God is continually asking you in so many ways to be such, and vain empty excuses will profit you nothing in His sight. How foolish of you to treat these servants whom He sends with contempt, to

crucify again His Son, for you to appear before Him without the wedding garment, for unless you change, He will certainly destroy you, cast you out into exterior darkness. In God's Name begin a good holy life now, continue and persevere in it, lest when He comes at the Day of Judgment, He says not: "bind his hands and feet and cast him out"; but rather: "Depart from Me ye cursed into everlasting fire."

THE MAN DEGRADED BENEATH THE BRUTE.

R

SYNOPSIS.

The Man Degraded Beneath the Brute.

"*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury.*"—Eph. v. 18.

Introduction . . The blind leader.

The Dreadful Effects of Intemperance.

1. Intemperance leads to many crimes.
2. Intemperance ruins health.
3. Intemperance makes life a a misery.
4. Intemperance drags men beneath the level of brutes.

Remedies against Intemperance.

5. Total Abstinence.
6. Continual prayer.
7. Avoid the drink shops.
8. Approach the Sacraments.

Conclusion . . Join against it; protect the young; resumé.

THE MAN DEGRADED BENEATH THE BRUTE.

(TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST).

"*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury.*"—Eph. v. 18.

INTRODUCTION.

The blind leader.—The Apostle, brethren, in the fifth Chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians exhorts them to lead a holy, a virtuous life, and he mentions many things they must avoid, many sins they must not commit; for he points out to them, that those who do such things have no inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. After pointing out these crimes he mentions one, which might be called the chief of all the others, the crime of drunkeness. "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury." Here the Apostle mentions a crime which stupifies the reason of man, blinds him so to speak to his actions, and then leads him onwards to the commission of every kind of sin. Instead of people heeding the Apostle's warning words, we have but to walk through our towns almost every day of the week, to find men and women, staggering along so drunk that they can scarcely walk. Let us earnestly then before God, think of this matter.

THE DREADFUL EFFECTS OF INTEMPERANCE.

1. Intemperance leads to many crimes.—The Prophet Habacuc (ii. 15), pronounces woe after woe against those who commit the most horrible and atrocious crimes, and on a level with them all he places the drunkard. We need not be surprised at this, for what sin, what crime is there, that the drunkard is not capable of committing, when his reason is tottering, when strong drink has rendered useless, that precious faculty which God has given him, to be his guide and counsellor on all occasions? What is there to hinder him then, from becoming a thief, a murderer, an adulterer, a tyrant at home and a nuisance abroad? Indeed as a rule the drunkard is guilty of other crimes, for when he has stupified the powers of his mind, what is it but the blind leading the blind, and must he not fall into the ditch? Well may the Apostle advise young men to be sober, for drunkeness is that abundant source of evil, which drives far away the lovely virtues of modesty, gentleness, and discretion. Drunkeness, places a man in a position to be cheated and deceived, to become the prey of the knave and the dishonest. He will betray his own secrets, and those of his employers, he is totally unfit for any position of trust, and his character and reputation in the world are lost. Who will employ a servant that cannot be trusted,

a man who is disreputable and a drunkard? With the best of intentions for the moment whilst he is sober; he becomes, when intoxicated, cruel and unjust to his family, betrays his friends and ruins himself. He will commit crimes, when in drink, the bare thought of which, would make him shudder with horror when sober. We cannot deny this, since we hear every day, of drunken quarrels, drunken fights and the like. We continually read of drunkards being sent to prison, for theft, for immorality, for beating, wounding, and even slaying others. This indeed is a fact which cannot be disputed. Oppose for an instant the evil wishes of the drunkard, and his mouth teems with curses and indecent language; attempt to thwart him, and his hand is raised to strike, and it often holds some deadly weapon, that deals injury or death to those around him. Hence the cursing, blaspheming, indecent expressions, the quarrelling, fighting, and riot which make up the drunkard's life.

2. Intemperance ruins health.—Again it is well known that intemperance will utterly ruin the health of any man. Strong drinks are slow poison, and however much they may cheer the spirits and invigorate the body at the moment they are taken, they always leave both weaker when the first effects have gone off. Every repetition of the crime, diminishes the strength of the drunkard, and this often becomes the cause of some inward disease,

which appears sooner of later, and brings on a painful and lingering death. If some escape and appear uninjured, their number is but few; and it is only because they have others who tend and care for them, and do all they can to save them. Only watch the drunkard yourselves if you want proofs of all this. Behold his bloated unhealthy looking face, see his bloodshot eyes, look how he trembles, watch his shaking hand, listen to his dry hacking cough. Watch him still and you will see, that he soon renders himself unfit for any serious mental or bodily work. Every frolic at night is followed by pains and sickness in the morning, and then, what before was the poison is now administered as a cure, so that another start is made, he is soon drunk again, and often a whole life is spent and wasted, in this most expensive and terrible frenzy.

3. Intemperance makes life a misery.—What we ask can be the motive that induces a man to act thus? Alas there can be no true motive for such madness and folly. It is strange, that to be merry and social, and to enjoy the company of his friends, man must stupify his faculties with drink and heat his brain with liquor. The clear head, and the calm mind, are best fitted to create mirth and good humour, to promote harmony and goodwill, and render us capable of true enjoyment. There can be no real reason given then, why men should make such fools and madmen of themselves.

When they just want a little more to make themselves happy and render them pleasent to others, that is the most certain indication which can be given, that they have even now drunk too much, for they have created a craving, and when they have that little more, then their reason like a false friend deserts them when they most need its assistance. They are now ripe for every mischief, and more apt to resent, than to follow, any good advice that might keep them from it, and hence they, as a rule, are neither social nor merry but quarrelsome to a degree. But as everyone has duties which are attached to his vocation in the world, the drunkard, who as a rule neglects these must cause himself much misery. The drunken father, if he has any affection in his heart, must be very miserable when he knows that often his wife, and perhaps little children, are ragged and starved the greater part of the week, whilst he spends his money in drink. Surely he will be miserable when he enters that poverty stricken home, and sees their sufferings. And is the drunken mother happy when she thinks of her dirty home, her neglected and untidy children, and her suffering husband? But no matter who the drunkards be, are they not miserable, at the thought of having lost the esteem and regard of all sober men, and do not the physical pain, the poverty, and the want of the very necessaries of life, which they bring upon themselves

through drink, render them very unhappy? Truly, such things must cause them a great deal of misery if they have any affection in their hearts, any spark of honour in their souls.

4. Intemperance drags a man beneath the level of brutes.—There is a story told, that a dog seeing a man lying drunk by the roadside, went to him and sniffed around him, and then hurried away with disgust on its face. Whether this story be true or not, we may be certain, that if the dog had reason and could so express its feelings, it would beyond doubt show its scorn and disgust, for such a being as the drunkard. Think but a moment and you will understand this. When the world first rose into being, and it was covered with and laden with trees and fruit; when the Creator had filled it with animals of every kind, His last, His greatest work was to make man, who was to be the King of the world, the ruler of the animal creation. Taking counsel with themselves, the Sacred Persons of the Most Holy Trinity said: "Let us make man to our own image and likeness," and therefore God made man to the image of Himself. Beauty indeed of some kind or other, belongs to every work of the Almighty, from the mighty oak to the smallest flower, from the greatest animal to the smallest insect, all is wonderful, all is grand, all is perfect. But man is beyond all these, not alone in the structure of his body, but in the powers of his soul which

animates and directs it, in that soul which is like its Author immortal, and which is His image. How God loves that image, how He cherishes it. And is it no crime, no sin to degrade and dishonour it? Look at the drunkard, the man made after the image of his Creator! Folly and stupidity sit upon his face, his tongue stammers, his feet refuse their office, his knees totter, from his lips come forth some confused, some unintelligible sounds, he reels, he staggers, he falls. Is this that reasonable, immortal being, made after the image of his Maker! Yes, he was made a little lower than the angels, but oh Heavens! see to what a fearful state drink has reduced him! He is little better now than a gibbering fool; one indeed whom the lowest animal might well refuse to notice, were that animal capable of understanding the high nature given to man, and this horrible degradation of it, that man whom God made to be King of the world, and ruler over the lower creation. Fearful indeed, beyond description are the evils produced by Intemperance.

REMEDIES AGAINST INTEMPERANCE.

5. Total Abstinence.—If such then be the dreadful effects of Intemperance, it is surely time to ask, what efforts must we make against this monster, what remedies must we take? The first and most efficient is that of Total Abstinence. Some there are, who may think it too severe for a man to bind

himself to such a remedy, and they will tell you that he ought to take a little in moderation, without going to excess. We answer, that this may appear very plausible, but the argument is not generally good. We ask where do our drunkards come from? It is quite clear that they are not produced from men and women, who never touch drink, who abstain entirely from it. The drunkards then must come from the number of moderate drinkers, and this is quite evident. For few will deny that drink is a temptation, and that one glass creates a craving for another, a second for a third and so on. The moderate drinker may be careful for a time, but sooner or later he will take too much, and having done this he will do so again, and then frequently. He may think that the causes which led him to do so, will excuse him, but they will not. Whether he meets friends in the drink shop, or entertains them at home, or whether he is afraid of the censure of his companions, there is no excuse; the law of sobriety binds us in every position and in every circumstance of life, and we must not offend God, to please our friends or anyone else.

Here too we find another matter which is at the root of the drink evil, that is, the habit of treating. A number of people, of all ages and descriptions meet in the drinking saloon, and at once they begin to press drink upon each other. Some are perhaps seasoned to it, others are not so, and a few are

young and can stand but little drink. Those who attempt to refuse drink, are laughed at and ridiculed by the others, and fear of this makes them drink all that is offered to them, with the result, that they take too much, and then become too feeble to take care of themselves, and soon they are drunk. A terrible amount of drunkeness is caused through this evil practice. It is not so much the drink itself which attracts the drunkard, it is the companions he meets in the saloon, the glamour of the place, the songs and the music, and when drink has softened his heart, and liquor heated his brain, when prudence is thus drowned, then he treats others, they treat him, and so he continues till he is drunk; and then he often quarrels with, and injures those with whom he has been drinking.

Another very evil practice, which is very common, is that of sending young children to such places for drink. A child who carries drink home for his mother, will naturally drink some of it, if he can, before he reaches home; he thinks if it is good for his parent it is good for him. And how many women are there, who frequently give children part of this drink, who allow their children to have part of it every time. This is a very evil thing, and should be stopped at once. It creates a craving for drink in the child, one which grows with its growth, and no wonder such a child takes drink to excess, as soon as he has the means to procure it. Such

mothers ruin their children, and they need not blame their sons, more than themselves.

6. Continual Prayer.—Another great and powerful remedy is continual prayer. We know well that in our spiritual life, we have one great struggle with powerful enemies, and beyond this we are outnumbered, since the devil, the world, and the flesh, are opposed to our own feeble selves. It is the highest folly for us to fight alone, for we must surely perish. The world and the devil are vastly our superiors in strength, and we must have help against them. We must go then to God, Our Father, and ask Him to give us strength, to fight with us. What is this, but to pray, and yet, what does the drunkard neglect more than his prayers? Does he not remember, how in the past he arose from his knees, filled with great courage and determination to avoid sin, and with the resolution to take this step or that, which would be greatly to his advantage? All this came from prayer. He went to his Father, and God poured graces into his soul, spoke to his conscience, and made him strong and valiant; and he walked firmly and boldly in the path of holiness till he began to neglect prayer. The drunkard, and those who wish to keep from being such, must continually pray earnestly to God, for strength and grace to keep away from it, to resist it, otherwise they will fight against it in vain. It is precisely because the drunkard does not pray, that

he falls so often and so easily. He must then pray earnestly, pray continually, pray especially when the craving for drink is upon him, and then God will help him, and with his Father's help and grace he will conquer.

7. Avoid the drink shops.—There is no point more important in our spiritual warfare, than that of avoiding the occasions of sin. People who fall into sin often murmur, that the temptation was so strong they really could not resist it. If we examine the matter we find that they rushed into their destruction, by running into danger, courting temptation, and relying on themselves. This they should avoid at every cost. The drunkard who knows that he is very weak, must be determined to avoid all that would make him fall again, especially the drink shop. Let him keep as far as possible from it, for once he enters its doors, he will find the same old companions who led him on before, the same craving for drink will arise, the same dangers beset him. He must not think that he is safe, because he has resolved not to drink, for as sure as he enters the dram shop he will do so, "he that loveth the danger shall perish in it."

8. Approach the Sacraments.—As our Faith teaches us, God has instituted the Sacraments to convey grace to men's souls, and each has its own particular graces. Two of these Sacraments we must frequently receive, if we wish to live holily,

namely, Penance and the Holy Eucharist. By the first we are restored to the favour of God, our sins are forgiven, and we are once more partakers of the abundant stream of graces, which God so willingly pours out upon His children. As for the second, who can measure the number of graces Our Lord brings with Him, when He comes to us in Holy Communion? Are they not leigon if we are only prepared properly to receive them. If we rise fortified and strengthened from prayer, how should we rise from Communion, when the Author of all goodness and grace is within our very souls. But if all should approach these two Sacraments frequently, how much more should the poor weak sinful man, who wishes to fill his soul with grace to help him to keep from drink, approach them? What a source of grace he has neglected in the past, let him do so no longer. He must, most earnestly approach both and begin again, and fortified with God's grace do his best to overcome himself, to crush for ever the craving for drink, which indulgence in it, has given birth to.

Conclusion.—Brethren, no sermon, nor course of sermons, could adequately put before you the countless evils caused by drink; it is a subject that we could study a life time, every hour presents it in some new phase, it is the great social evil of the day. But have we not seen and heard enough about it to fill our hearts with sorrow, to sadden us,

when we see noble men and women dragged down and degraded with it, when we hear also of the many horrible crimes committed through it? Should we not, for the sake of our common humanity, watch over ourselves, lest we give evil example in this matter; should we not through our love of souls join every crusade and every effort that is made against it? Catholic parents, be most careful over your youths and children, and keep them away from it. And you fathers, mothers, and young men who have fallen into its clutches, be now once for all, determined to become a total Abstainer, to pray earnestly, to avoid the drink shop, and go frequently to the Sacraments. If you have degraded yourself, rise now from your degradation, have courage, fight this enemy bravely, God will help you, and you will yet be respected and esteemed, and in the end will save your soul. Be resolute then, never again be "drunk with wine wherein is luxury."

GOD AND HIS CREATURES: MAN AND HIS FELLOWS.

S

SYNOPSIS.

God and His Creatures: Man and his Fellows.

"So also shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts."—St. Matt. xviii. 35.

Introduction . . We must forgive every one.

God's Wondrous Charity to Men.
1. The enormous debt we owe to God.
2. Severity of the penalty for non-payment.
3. God often forgives our enormous debts.

Men's Unkindness to each other.
4. The smallness of the fellow servants debt.
5. The wicked servant will not forgive.

Conclusion . . The wicked servant's condemnation—Our condemnation unless we forgive.

GOD AND HIS CREATURES: MAN AND HIS FELLOWS.

(TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.)

"So also shall my Heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts."—St. Matt. xviii. 35.

INTRODUCTION.

We must forgive every one.—When we consider, my brethren, the parable related in this morning's Gospel, and the significant words with which Our Lord concludes it, nothing more can surely be required to convince us, that we must forgive every one who has in any way offended us. St. Peter has been speaking to Christ on this very subject, and the parable is part of His answer to the Apostle. "Lord, how often shall my brother offend against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith to him: "I say not to thee, till seven times, but till seventy times seven times." Our Lord here shows that there must be no limit to our forgiveness, and then he goes on to illustrate this doctrine. "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened to a king, who would take an account of his servants." And one was brought to

him that owed him ten thousand talents, and as he could not pay, the lord gave orders, that he should be sold together with his wife and children and all that he had, so that payment might be made. But when that servant beseeches the king for mercy, he is moved with pity and forgives him the debt. But the servant going out, meets a fellow-servant who owes him a hundred pence, and taking him by the throat he demands payment. When the fellow-servant beseeches him, as he had formerly besought his lord and master, he will not listen, but has him cast into prison. Others seeing this are grieved, and fail not to tell the king all, and having sent for the wicked man, most sternly does he reproach him, and delivers him to the torturers, till the last farthing of the debt is paid. And, "So," says Our Lord in conclusion, "shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not everyone his brother from your hearts." Who does not see that the king here mentioned is God Himself? Who does not realise that the servants spoken of are His creatures; men and women who have to render a strict account of their lives to Him? We have then in the parable, the wondrous charity of God to men, contrasted with men's unkindness to each other. And we have the distinct warning of Christ; that, we must forgive others or God will not forgive us. Let us therefore, earnestly and attentively consider this matter.

GOD'S WONDROUS CHARITY TO MEN.

1. The enormous debt we owe to God.—The king as the parable tells us, began to do that which he had every right to do, namely, to take an account of his servants. And they bring to him one that owes him a debt of ten thousand talents. This indeed was an enormous sum, being equivalent, to about one million eight hundred and seventy five thousand pounds of our money; and one almost wonders why the king had not long before demanded payment. Now as our holy faith teaches us, God made us out of nothing, and therefore we are absolutely His. He has given us our very being, with all the powers and talents that we possess. We have nothing which has not come from Him. Truly then, we owe Him a great debt for this very reason, if there were not others. But when we ask why He sent us into this world, and religion tells us that He created us that we might love and serve Him, then indeed we realise how much we owe to God; since our every thought, word, and work, ought to be employed in His service, and each and every one of them are due to God. What a fearful debt then many of us must owe our Maker, not alone because our very beings are His, but especially because we use all our powers and talents, not in serving Him, but in offending Him again and again. When we think also of the greatness and majesty of God, how

enormous must be the guilt, and therefore the debt, of us mere worms who dare to insult Him. Ah! strange indeed that He does not at once demand, that we pay the debt, or suffer the punishment due to us! But no, this loving Father by His Providence still watches over us, and gives us many gifts, as though we had never offended Him. We squander away our time instead of serving Him, we use the very powers He has given us to insult Him, and still He continues to allow us to live! Terrible then must be the enormity of our debt if we still continue to sin against Him.

2. Severity of the penalty for non-payment.—This is rendered still more clear, if we observe the severe penalty, which the king is about to impose upon the servant when he cannot pay the debt. He and his whole family are to be sold into slavery, and the money thus procured is to pay the king. What a dreadful punishment this is; to be sold to a master whom he must obey in all things, and not alone must he himself be sold, but even his wife and children whom he loves. And may they not be sold to different masters, and thus be parted for a long time, if not for life. Truly the debt must be great, when the king would take such severe measures to recover it. What then must be the punishment, which awaits the wretched sinner at the moment of death, when he has to give in his account, not to a mere earthly king, but to a great

and terrible God; when the account is not concerning the mere dross of earthly wealth, but the service which should have been rendered to the sinner's Maker? Ah, in every respect there is a terrible, a most awful difference! An earthly king, might sentence a subject of his to severe punishment for life, but the sentence of God on the wicked will be passed for ever. An earthly prince might cast his prisoner even into a dungeon, but God hurls the wicked into the abyss, the prison of hell. What servitude on earth, what punishment, could be in any way equal to this? What slave master could ever be as cruel as the devil when he has a damned soul in his clutches? What greater horrors of either body or soul, could slavery bring upon a man, than the agonies of hell? And he, who before was perhaps happy with wife and children, must suffer for ever in this terrible prison with the damned for companions. How fearful then the debt which causes our Divine Judge to say: "Depart from Me thou cursed one into everlasting fire."

3. God often forgives our enormous debts.—But as the parable relates, the servant cast himself at the king's feet and pleaded for mercy: "Have patience with me and I will pay thee all." Will the king hearken to this prayer? Yes, he listens, and though he might ask, how could this man pay such a great sum of money; yet is he moved with pity, and not alone does he grant time to pay, but

he goes much further and actually forgives the debt. God, Our Father not only listens to our prayers, but He actually entreats us to pray, and most distinctly promises to hear us and grant our requests when they are for our good. "Pray always, pray without ceasing;" and again, "Ask and you shall receive, Knock and it shall be opened to you, Seek and you shall find." At all times will this loving Father hear us, and especially when we are in trouble, when we are tempted; then especially does He wish to help us, if we will only ask Him. But He will do far more than this, He will forgive us our great debts if we earnestly seek forgiveness. When life is over, then there is nothing but justice, but now Our Father lovingly awaits us in the Confessional, there to pardon us. Has He not instituted the Sacrament of Penance for this very reason? When our souls are stained with serious sin, is He not always urging us, in every way possible, to go to Confession? And when we do go, with what patience and gentleness does He listen, with what sweetness and love does He through His sacred minister forgive us. Think but a moment, what that forgiveness means. It means, that although we may have often, and in the most contemptible way insulted Him, yet He pardons us and gives us once more a claim to Heaven, making us once more His children. It means that all our past graces, good actions and merit, are once more recorded in our

favour, yes, and more than this, He will give us every assistance and grace, to help and strengthen us in the future, lest we offend Him again. How good then, how generous is our Creator, how boundless His charity to men, who can understand its depths?

MEN'S UNKINDNESS TO EACH OTHER.

4. The smallness of the fellow-servant's debt. But there is another side to the parable, another picture which we must study now, and that is the conduct of the forgiven servant; and this study will show us, that, whilst God deals so lovingly and gently with men, men act with the greatest possible malice and wickedness toward each other. After the King has forgiven the servant the debt, the man goes out and meets a fellow servant, who owes him a hundred pence. This sum, when compared to the ten thousand talents is indeed small; the one being about one million eight hundred and seventy five thousand pounds, the other about three pounds two shillings. But small as the debt is, the wicked servant takes hold of the other by the throat, throttles him, and says, "Pay what thou owest" (verse 28). Now truly, this servant had a right to what was his own, but still he might have forgiven this small debt, seeing that the King had forgiven him a much larger one; and even though he had a right to demand it, he had none to demand it with force and violence as he does. What would have become of him had the

King acted thus? How many of us imitate this wicked servant? If our fellow man offends us in the slightest matter, how bitter are our thoughts concerning it; we persecute him by our cutting remarks, we throttle him by our angry, malicious conduct in his presence, since we are so angry, that we cannot even allow him to speak and explain that he did not mean to offend us. And again, even if he did really offend us, are we to behave as though we were not Christians, and refuse to forgive him? Study the matter as we will, we cannot find even the shadow of a reason, for our wretched conduct. Behold then, how we are equally guilty with the wicked servant, how we in fact are much more guilty, since we are more enlightened by the life of the Great King, Christ our Lord.

5. The wicked servant will not forgive.—We can easily picture the consternation of the poor fellow servant, when the wicked man seizes him by the throat and speaks so rudely to him. In pain and anguish he cries out, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." It is remarkable that this prayer is exactly the same as the wicked servant made to the king. No doubt, Our Lord in the parable designed that the debts should be so different, one great, the other small, and that the prayers should be precisely the same, in order to show how very grievous was the wicked servant's conduct. Surely this prayer of his fellow man

ought to have brought back to the wicked servant's mind, the terror which he felt when he had to appear before the king, the pain which filled his soul, when the king was about to pass sentence upon him, about to send him to slavery and misery. But no, his heart seems turned to stone, there is no kindness, no forgiveness in it: and therefore he has his fellow man cast into prison, till the money is paid. No doubt in our hearts, we at this moment despise the wicked servant for his wicked ways. But let us carry our thoughts into daily life and what do we see there? In the morning, perhaps, we bend our knees to pray to God, and part of our prayer is this: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." We rise from our knees, and in the course of the day some one in our home, perhaps those who should be dear to us offends us, and do we forgive? Alas no, like the wicked servant we are angry, violent, and seek our revenge. We speak harshly, we even are hateful, we have our revenge. And beyond this, we now and then go to Confession, and we ask God the King of Kings to forgive us our many and terrible sins. But some person or persons have offended us in the past, and surely when we meet them next we shall be friendly with them, kind and charitable? No indeed, we still meet them in the same cool, angry, perhaps even violent manner, we will not speak, we will not for-

give, we will have our revenge. Oh brethren, and yet we have been to Confession and asked Our Father to forgive us! Do you think He will forgive us? Certainly not, for we have not forgiven our brethren. One of the essential parts of the Sacrament of Penance is, that we are sorry for our past grievous sins, and have a firm and determined resolution never to sin again. Without this our Confession is but a sacrilege, an insult to God; and can we honestly say we had this resolution, when the next hour or day we treat our fellow man so cruelly? Ah, our Confessions are often so many shams. Remember Christ's words: "So also shall My Heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts." If we do not forgive others, God will not forgive us.

Conclusion.—Brethren, the wicked servant's wretched conduct was condemned even by the world, by the other debtors of the king, and therefore they told the king about it. He sent for the man and he is brought before him, then he sternly reproaches him, and hands him over to the torturers till the debt is paid. God knows all our lives, even our secret thoughts. At the end of life, we shall have to give an account of our whole existence, our thoughts, our words, our deeds, and though we may have prayed often, though we may have been to confession often, He will not forgive us unless every one of us, has forgiven our fellow men from our

hearts. He then, if we have not pardoned others will not pardon us, but will deliver us to the tortures of hell. "Depart from me thou cursed one into everlasting fire." The wicked servant did not forgive his fellow servant, and if we imitate him, God will not forgive us. "So also shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother, from your heart."

THE MASTERPIECE OF GOD'S CREATION.

SYNOPSIS.

The Masterpiece of God's Creation.

"*Holy Mary, Mother of God pray for us.*"—Council of Ephesus.

Introduction . . The Council of Ephesus.

The Order and Harmony of the Physical and Moral Worlds.

1. The laws, work and harmony of the physical world.
2. The laws, individual vocations, and resemblance in the moral world.

This Order and Harmony applied to Mary.

3. Mary's Vocation :—"Mother of God."
4. Mary's great sanctity :—"Holy Mary."
5. Mary's intercession:—"Pray for us."

Conclusion . . . By our conduct lead others to know and love her. We must continually seek her intercession.

THE MASTERPIECE OF GOD'S CREATION.

'*Holy Mary Mother of God, pray for us.*''—Council of Ephesus.

INTRODUCTION.

The Council of Ephesus.—We live, brethren, in what is called an intellectual age, when men carry their questions of why and wherefore, out beyond the boundaries of science into the domain of religion, and demand from us an account of the faith that is in us, and proofs for the many holy doctrines we profess. Hence it is, that we are sometimes asked, why we Catholics love and honour Mary so much, and why love of Mary seems to mingle with the life stream that throbs in the heart of Catholicity. Yet these questions have been answered for centuries, and the Catholic wonders why others cannot see them as he does.

For you know, that in the early ages of the Church, a heretic came forward to teach a doctrine, which made Mary but little better than an ordinary woman, yet the first time Nestorius began to preach his novelties, the people fled in terror from the Church and refused to listen. Quickly the news of the insult offered to the Mother of God, spread abroad, and the whole Christian world was dis-

turbed. Africa, with the great St. Cyril at its head, sent forth a cry of indignation, Europe and Asia quickly responded, whilst the reigning Pope condemned the doctrine. A general council was held at Ephesus, where the greatest excitement prevailed. Immense crowds surrounded the Church, in which the Fathers sat; and when late at night they unanimously declared that Mary was truly the Mother of God, then Ephesus seemed to tremble with emotion. Hymns of joy were heard on every side, the city was illuminated from end to end; and then from the overflowing hearts of the vast multitude, went up one great cry which rent the heavens. What was it? It was this: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us." Thus A.D. 431, the Council of Ephesus, under the presidency of Pope Celestine, gave an answer to men of the twentieth century, concerning the Catholic's love of Mary, and if we examine these words, they will unfold to us a logical sequence in favour of devotion to Mary, which no impartial mind can resist.

THE ORDER AND HARMONY OF THE PHYSICAL AND MORAL WORLD.

1. The laws, work, and harmony in the physical world.—There are few of us who have not, at some time or other, been more than delighted with the physical world around us. Moments there have been, when charmed with the beauties of

material creation, we have raised our hearts in gratitude, from nature to nature's God, and have tried to picture to ourselves, the grandeur of our eternal home in the next world, by comparing it with the beauty of our resting place in this. But have we ever paused and tried to analyse the wonderful order and harmony which runs through all God's physical creation? Look at the heavens adove you, and the earth beneath, and tell me why all creatures that are in and upon them, seem ever to be doing the same thing; how they do to-day what they did yesterday, and this year what they did last. It is because the God who made them, has given them laws which they must obey. The sun, the moon, the stars, the winds and seas, are all at the beck and call of their Maker, they cannot, like man, refuse to do their Creator's bidding.

Look again at the myriads of beings that surround us, from the little flower that grows at our feet, to the mighty oak that waves its boughs in the forest. Surely God in His bounty has made many that are useless. No, the little creature that lives but for a day, has a place, and a work to do in the plan of its Creator, just as well as the being which lives for almost a hundred years. They work in harmony with each other just as the wheels of a watch do, and make up the grand whole, which we may call the universe.

Descend still further, and examine the nature of

every being, and you will find a scale and gradation, rising from the lowest order to the highest. Begin with the gross material world and ascend, and you will find that the nearer you come to God, the more His creatures resemble Him. Down in the depths of creation we find things without life, and then we ascend till we come to man, who is made to the very image of God. Yet man's soul dwells in a body, whilst the Angels who are spirits have no bodies, and are therefore more like their Maker Who is purely spiritual. So we can begin with the lowest creature and go on ascending in our gradation, till it culminates in that being next to God Himself. Three conclusions flow from all this; namely, that God has made laws for every creature, that each creature has a special work to do, and that the higher each creature is in the scale of creation, the more it resembles its Maker.

2. The laws, individual vocations, and resemblance in the Moral World.—But if such be the order and harmony of the physical world, it is but a faint reflection of that of the moral world, the world of good and evil. Here too, we find laws and commandments which God has made for man to obey, but man is free and can refuse to do so, though at the cost of his soul, of losing Heaven. What these laws are we need not tell you, they are God's commandments and the Gospel precepts, and the code of morals which the Church ever teaches.

And though these laws or commandments are made to rule all men, still they are framed to rule, and to be applied to each individual life, to each vocation. Do not forget that we have all a particular vocation. No matter what our state may be, whether out in the world, or hidden in the home, we have each a special work to do, usually in union with some one else, and we are part and parcel of the harmony that runs through God's moral world.

When He made the world, He decreed all things, and foresaw every tittle that concerned our work in this life. Yet pause, and see how numerous our vocations are. One is a parent, another a child, one is a ruler, another a subject, one is out in the world, the other is hidden at home. And according to our work, according to our vocation, so every one receives his measure of grace. The greater his work, the higher his vocation, the more, the greater graces does he receive. Now the more graces we receive and correspond with, the greater and holier we become, and we are therefore more and more holy and closer, and more like to God Who is Holiness Itself. Three conclusions also flow from this; namely, that God has made moral laws to rule us, that each of us has a special vocation under these laws, and finally, that grace is given to us according to our vocation, to the work we have to do for God.

THIS ORDER AND HARMONY APPLIED TO MARY.

3. Mary's Vocation: "Mother of God."—But what has all this to do with Mary? Shall we find in her this order and harmony, which runs through God's creation? Yes, in its most beautiful and complete form. Who is Mary, what her vocation? She is that great woman spoken of in Eden, when God cursed the serpent, "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed, she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel" (Gen. iii. 15). She too is the woman foretold by the Prophets, the woman created and destined by God, to labour with Him in the greatest works and mysteries of Christianity, the Incarnation and Redemption. "Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel," (Isais vii. 14). There have been many holy women in this world, who have brought forth kings and princes, and other children whom the world honours and esteems. But Mary brought forth her God and Maker, the King of kings whom all men must adore. To none amongst the daughters of Eve was this sublime vocation given, but to her who is "blessed amongst women," yet shall we not in Heaven find a higher calling? No, in Heaven and on earth, amid angels, amongst men, there is no creature with dignity so exalted, with vocation more sublime. Outside the Godhead,

after the Person of her Divine Son, she has no equal, all are far below her. This is Mary's position in the Divine plan, and we cannot place her elsewhere, without destroying the leading features of our religion, and the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity. She is no grand ideal, which the so-called poetic sentiment of Catholicity has set up on a pedestal to be honoured. She is as much a reality as we are, and the man who would have his religion without Mary, would have a religion of his own and not God's making.

4. Mary's great sanctity: "Holy Mary"—But if the excellence of every being's nature, and its resemblence to God, are to be measured by its vocation, what must be the measure of Mary's sanctity? Nearest to her God in every way, and exalted above all other creatures by her sublime vocation, are we to believe her an exception in this point of holiness? No indeed, for were exceptions possible in any case, they could never be so in hers. If we admit her vocation, if we acknowledge her to be the Mother of God, then by sheer force of reason, we must be forced to cry out with the Fathers of Ephesus; "Holy Mary, Mother of God." Holiness cannot be separated from Mary's vocation, for either Mary is Mother of God and therefore holy, or she is not holy and therefore cannot be the Mother of Christ. This is the reasoning of the Catholic mind to-day, and it was the logical se-

quence which unfolded itself to the Catholics of Ephesus, more than fifteen hundred years ago; and it is founded on the awful holiness of God Himself. For, can anyone who knows what the very word God means, can anyone who has any idea of God's tremendous sanctity; can such a person think that God could, or would, take flesh from a mother, in any way unworthy of Him? Yet Mary to be worthy of him must have been as the Angel has said, "full of grace," and holiness. God in the Old Law commanded, that the ark which contained His commandments should be made of most precious wood, and covered with sheets of the purest gold; and how would He frame that ark, that woman, in whom Heaven's choicest Jewel, the Son of God was to dwell for nine months, and Who was, to be bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh? But if Mary's vocation demanded such sanctity even before the birth of her Son, what must it have been before her holy death? The saints became perfect by living in the presence of God, and think of Mary's life with her Son, when she held Him in her arms, when He nestled on her bosom, when for well nigh thirty years, she was His constant companion. Could she help being holy when she lived with Holiness? Could she help being on fire with love, when she lived with Divine Love? With Him at Bethlehem, she was with Him on Calvary, and the hour came when she went to

take her place by His side in Heaven. Well might the angels cry out in glad surprise when first they saw their Queen: "Who is she that cometh forth, as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array"? (Canticle of Cantic. vi. 9). Well indeed might they ask "Who is she"? For, "a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" (Apoc. xii. 1). Yes, as the brilliant light of the noonday sun, surpasses that of the smallest star, so does Mary's sublime holiness, surpass that of all other creatures. But language is weak and too feeble to describe it, and so we cry out with the Prophet of old: "To what shall I compare thee O daughter of Sion, to what shall I liken thee O daughter of Jerusalem"? Mary's vocation calls for a measure of holiness, which it is most difficult to describe, only when we know God's awful holiness, shall we know Mary's, for she was a worthy Mother of the Eternal Father's beloved Son; yet, she is not a goddess but a creature, the most beautiful and most holy creature, that ever came from the Creator's hand, His choice work, the crown and climax of His creation. No wonder indeed, that the Ephesians cried out "Holy Mary, pray for us."

5. Mary's intercession: "Pray for us.—Some might here urge that we should not pray to

Mary nor ask her intercession. But if we read the twentieth chapter of Genesis, we find God distinctly commanding Abimelech, to go and ask Abraham to pray for him, because He would not turn away from Abraham's prayers. We find a similar command in the Book of Job (chap. xlii.), when the holy man's friends were forgiven, only because he prayed for them. The prayers of Moses appeased the wrath of God again and again, when the Israelites had offended Him (Exodus xxxii. 14). God most certainly, would not listen to the Saints if He were dishonoured by their praying for others, neither would He command His saints to do so. Even we sinners ask for the prayers and intercession of each other, St. Paul often does so in the Sacred Scriptures, and the mother naturally prays that God may bless her children. If God then will listen to His saints, will He not hear His holy Mother; if He command men to seek the intercession of the saints, does He not wish us far more to ask for the intercession of Mary? Impossible almost, would it be to name the great saints, who from the time of the Apostles, have written in praise of, and have invoked Mary's aid. Being the Mother of Christ, she is our Mother also, and what is more natural, than that a child should seek his Mother's aid and intercession. Never then will the children of the Catholic Church cease to cry out, as the Ephesians did: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us."

Conclusion.—Nestorianism, brethren, is not dead, it lives to-day under another name. We then like the people of Ephesus, must most jealously guard our Mother's honour, and defend her greatness. Teach others by your example as they did, that Mary is worthy of honour and praise. Forget not that she is your Mother, that she loves you because you belong to her Divine Son, and she will gladly intercede for you with that Son, when you ask her prayers. When life then is weary, when the cross feels heavy, when things seem dark, confused and dangerous, when sin is powerful, temptation strong, then fly to your Mother and ask her succour. At all times, but especially in such moments as these, cry out as did the Ephesians A.D. 431: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us."

THE PRIVILEGES OF MARY.

SYNOPSIS.

The Privileges of Mary.

"*Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee.*"—St. Luke i. 28.

Introduction . . The grandeur of Mary.

The Privileges of Mary

1. Mary a creature.
2. Mary the Masterpiece of God's Creation.
3. Mary pre-ordained to be God's Mother
4. Mary's Immaculate Conception.
5. Mary increases every grace.

Conclusion . . Study Mary's greatness. God honoured her so should we. The saints can intercede for us, much more Mary. We should imitate her in her humility.

THE PRIVILEGES OF MARY.

"*Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee.*—St. Luke i. 28."

INTRODUCTION.

The grandeur of Mary.—The Mother of God, my brethren, stands out as a prominent figure, in the history of the world's redemption. From all eternity, God predestined her for her grand mission. As man had fallen through the aid of a woman, so the Creator willed that a woman should be associated in the great work of the redemption. Man placed in an earthly paradise had fallen, had become sinful, and degenerated, and when God came upon earth to redeem us, He might well have taken to Himself a body formed by angelic beings, or clothed Himself with the flesh of the saintly dead. But He did not, He took His place amongst the generations of mankind. He predestined a woman to have the incomparable honour of being His Mother. And just as God is a Being Who is Himself eternal beauty, just as there are no limits to His grandeur and holiness, so indeed great must have been the holiness and grandeur of that woman, who was found worthy enough to be His Mother. It is of her great privileges we would speak at present, in order that men may learn to know her better, and come to honour her more.

THE PRIVILEGES OF MARY.

1. Mary a creature.—To prevent all mistakes about our devotion to Mary, we lay it down as an undoubted maxim of our holy faith, that whatever excellencies we attribute to Our Lady, whatever words we use to express the love we have for her; still we regard her, only as a pure creature, infinitely below God, and depending upon Him for all the gifts of nature and of grace, which she had in this life; and for the eminent degree of glory to which she is exalted in Heaven. So that our devotion to Mary begins in, and terminates in God; and in honouring Mary we honour God much more; in praising and admiring her eminent virtues, we only proclaim the infinite power and bounty of her Divine Maker, Who enriched her with such excellent gifts. And in doing this, we are in harmony with the thoughts and words of Mary herself, when she says: "Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me." And again: "Behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed" (St. Luke i. 48-49). Thus does Our Lady herself, mark out precisely the honour and devotion which we pay to her, and which Catholics will ever pay to her till time is no more. She tells us the reason why this will be so. "Behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed," and then at once she tells us why; "Because He that is mighty

hath done great things to me." Her words indeed may be drawn out thus. "I will be honoured, I will be called blessed, not indeed for anything which I have of myself, but on account of the wonderful and surpassing works of grace, which my God has wrought in me." Behold the clear proof then, that Mary is to be honoured on account of God's gifts to her, and that therefore when we praise her, we praise God.

2. Mary the Masterpiece of God's creation.—This then is the doctrine of the Catholic Church. We honour Mary as a pure creature, the most excellent that ever was created, but still a creature, dependent on God for all her greatness and her glory. We do not give her the honour due to God, and those who accuse us of this, know not the very rudiments of the Catholic faith. No, we honour Mary, we are devoted to her, but the honour and devotion we give her is relative, which in reality begins in, and ends in God. But if Mary be only a creature, still she is the Jewel, the crown and climax of creation, the masterpiece of God. Who has been, will be, or can be greater than Mary, who can have vocation more incomparable? She alone after God surpasses in greatness, all both in Heaven and on earth. Neither prophets, nor martyrs, nor angels, nor saints, nor any being amongst creatures is greater than Our Lady. She is Queen of angels and of saints; she is the hand-maiden of God yet

His Mother; both Mother and Virgin; the Mother of Him whom men and angels, own to be the Lord of all things.

3. Mary pre-ordained to be God's Mother.—The first great grace bestowed upon Mary, was her having been elected from all eternity, to be the Mother of God; a dignity of so high a rank, that nothing in this world can ever approach near to it. From the beginning and before all ages, God chose and ordained for His only-begotten Son, a Mother of whom, when He became incarnate, He should be born in the fulness of time; and He so loved her above all other creatures, that in her alone, He took pleasure with exceeding good will, (Confer. Bull Ineffabilis of Pius ix). By virtue of her great vocation, Mary was chosen to be, next after her Son, the principal instrument in man's redemption. Because she is Mother of the Son, she is daughter of the Eternal Father, and the most pure Spouse of the Holy Ghost. The Father elected to give His Son to her that He might be her Son also; the Son Himself made choice of her to be His Mother, and the Holy Spirit by His operations, caused Mary to conceive and bring forth her Divine Child, (cf. Bull Ineffabilis). Who then can measure the holiness of her, whose virginal flesh was found pure enough to clothe the Son of God Himself? Who can fathom the sanctity of her, upon whom the choicest gifts of the Divine Treasury, were so

lavishly showered? Who can understand the moral beauty, grandeur and holiness of her whom the August and most Holy Trinity loved so well, and with each Person of Which she was so closely related? Well does the Catholic Church style her Queen of Angels and of men. Yes, she is not the Mother of some earthly prince however great, but she is Mother of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

4. Mary's Immaculate Conception.—From the maternity of Mary flowed her second great privilege, that immensity of grace which prepared her for it. Try your utmost to understand, the sanctity required in that great woman, in whose womb, the very God of sanctity was to live and take His flesh. Can we for one moment, consider such a woman wanting in one tittle, in anything, that could make her worthy of such a Son? To affirm that there might be something wanting in her, would be an intolerable insult to God. No, the stain, the breath, even the very shadow of sin, must never fall on her, whose blood was to become the blood of her God, and whose bone was to be His bone. Pure and Immaculate then was she conceived in her Mother's womb. By a special privilege of God, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, from the first moment of her existence, Mary was free from all bondage, from even the shadow of original sin. All the children of Adam had sinned

in their father's fall, and are therefore born in bondage, in the state of original sin. Adam was made perfect in body and soul, and beyond this, God bestowed upon him original justice, and therefore the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier, dwelt in his soul and he was innocent and sinless. And beyond this he had another perfection, which consisted in the harmony and integrity of his spiritual life. Hence there was no rebellion in his members, no violence in his passions, no ignorance in his intellect. But the moment he fell all this was changed. The Holy Spirit left him and Eve, and they became subject to misery and death. The harmony that was theirs before, now departed, their souls became turbulent, their members violent, their passions rebellious. No longer were they pleasing to God, for they had lost original justice. This justice was freely bestowed by God to our first parents, they had no right to it, and when Adam lost it, his children and their descendants had neither claim nor title to it. Hence we, Adam's children, come into the world deprived of original justice, and it is only through the Sacrament of Baptism, that we become God's children as Adam was. No soul that enters this world, has by nature, the gift of the Holy Spirit dwelling in it. Mary was the one grand exception to this, out of the whole human race. At the moment of her conception, at that precise moment when the soul is united to the body,

God infused into the body which St. Ann gave to Mary, a most beautiful soul, filled with the Holy Ghost, illuminated and sanctified by the Spirit of God. Never then, for even part of an instant, had original sin any power over her, never had it cast even its shadow upon her. Think of Mary's vocation, of the work she had to perform, of the Holiness of Him Whom she had to bear, and you will see the reason of Mary's Immaculate Conception, and you will see that her Son would never have taken flesh, from a woman that ever had been stained, with even the faintest taint of sin. Mary then even in her Conception, was that part of God's Creation unsullied, and undefiled. Upon her, God could look with delight and exclaim in all truth and justice: "Thou art all fair My beloved, My love, My beautiful one, and there is neither spot nor wrinkle in thee." Wherefore we see, that far above the angelic spirits and all the saints, God so wonderfully enriched her, with the abundance of all heavenly gifts, drawn from the treasury of the Divinity, that she, always entirely free from every stain of sin, and all beautiful and perfect, might be full of innocence and holiness, so great, that, under God there is none greater, and that none but God can comprehend (cf. Bull Ineffabilis),

5. Mary increases every grace.—From this second favour conferred upon Mary, there flows a third, that of being preserved throughout the whole

course of her life, from the shadow of actual sin. Conceived immaculate, she possessed complete harmony in her spiritual life. There was no rebellion in her members, no violence in her passions, no ignorance in her mind. She was full of God, full of obedience. Her will was fully and wholly inspired by the will of God, and her whole heart and soul with all its perfections, were in perfect subjection. Her will therefore was ever subject to her reason, and her reason was never obscured by passion. As soon then as she knew God by faith, she loved Him by charity, and broke forth into acts of love, praise and adoration. Her heart took fire with love for her Creator in an instant, and because God's grace found no resistance in her soul, because she never ceased to co-operate with it, it grew and increased in her in the most remarkable way. Who can tell, what streams of grace flowed into Mary's soul, during that nine months when she carried her Son in her womb, and His Heart beat close to hers? Who will explain to us, the many favours conferred upon Mary, during the infancy of her Son, when He nestled in her arms, and took nourishment from her holy breast? Was not Mary's soul inundated with graces and favours, long before that life of thirty years spent with her Son was completed? Was there ever a Son more able to give, ever one more willing to give than Mary's Son.? Yea, Christ loved, cherished, and was delighted

with His Mother, countless then, must have been the graces and gifts he bestowed upon her; and as she corresponded with every one, we are lost in astonishment and wonder, when we try to measure her greatness and her sanctity. Yet, even before Our Lord's conception in her womb, the angel saluted her, as "full of grace."

Conclusion.—Try then brethren, as much as you can to fathom the grandeur and greatness of Mary, and the more you dwell upon it, the more wonderful will her sanctity appear to you, the more numerous her privileges seem. Surely no man will for a moment deny, that God has highly honoured Mary, by ordaining her to be His mother, and by bestowing upon her, the many graces and favours that prepared her for her sublime Vocation. We therefore love and honour her, because God has so loved and honoured her. We pray, to her and ask her to intercede for us with her Divine Son, and if God will hear the prayers of the saints, most assuredly He will hearken to His holy Mother. Often then indeed must we go to her, for she is most blessed among women, and has received greater graces than all other creatures, because of her nearness and dearness and special love of Jesus, because being our Mother also, she has a special interest in our salvation, and a special power to plead for us. But, if we would please Mary, we must strive our utmost to imitate her, and cultivate that great funda-

mental virtue which made her so dear to God, the virtue of humility. "Because He hath had regard to the humility of His handmaid: for, behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed" (St. Luke i. 48). Here indeed is what made our Mother so pleasing to God, let us copy her example, make ourselves pleasing to her Son, and often ask her to help us in this great work, by using the angel's words when we seek her aid. "Hail full of grace the Lord is with thee."

THE VISITATION OF THE SICK

SYNOPSIS.

The Visitation of the Sick.

"I was sick and you visited Me"—St. Matt. xxv. 36.

Introduction . . The excellence of alms-giving.

Charity should run through all our Actions

1. Charity is the queen of virtues.
2. Charity points out our duties.
3. Charity differs from good nature.
4. Charity is not ostentatious.
5. Charity considered in some of its effects.

Charity should make us most kind to the Sick

6. The Church's care of the Sick.
7. Charity urges us to imitate Christ in this.
8. Charity should make us see Christ in the Sick.
9. Charity commands us to help the Sick.

Conclusion . . . We must see in the Sick, representatives of Our Lord.

THE VISITATION OF THE SICK.

(HOSPITAL SUNDAY).

"*I was sick and you visited me.*"—St. Matt. xxv. 36.

INTRODUCTION.

The excellence of alms-giving.—No virtue, brethren, which religion prescribes, ought to be more familiar to us, than that of Charity or alms-giving; not only because it is so closely connected with the love of God, in which the plenitude of the whole law consists, but also because of the many inestimable advantages which are annexed to it, as the Holy Scriptures point out. In one place we are told, (Tobias. xii. 8-9), that the practice of alms-giving has the force of appeasing God's anger, and rendering Him propitious to us. Elsewhere we are told by Christ, that "even a glass of cold water given in the name of a disciple shall not lose its reward" St. (Matt. x. 42.) These declarations of the Sacred Writings, should make us eager to give alms, eager to show by practical deeds, not only our love of God, but also of man for God's sake. Hence we wish to speak to-day when we plead for the sick, of that great virtue of charity, which should move our hearts and make us generous to all, but to the sick in particular.

CHARITY SHOULD RUN THROUGH ALL OUR ACTIONS.

1. Charity is the queen of virtues.—Charity or love runs through the whole of Christianity, as the crimson blood runs through the human body. Without the latter, the body would soon decay and die, without the former, religion would become but a sham and a mockery. This is very clear from the words of St. Paul: "If I speak with the tongues of men, and of Angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And if I should have prophecy and should know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith so that I could remove mountains and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 1-3). More emphatic if possible were the words of Our Lord Himself. When the lawyer asked what he should do to gain eternal life, Christ spoke not of prayer, of penance, or alms-deeds, nor of anything but love. The Commandments were to be kept, good works to be done, but Christ's answer shows that charity was to be the motive, the mainspring, the soul that was to vivify all. Jesus said to the lawyer: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul and with thy

whole mind. This is the greatest and the first Commandment, and the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets" (St. Matt. xxii. 37-40). Thus again charity is not merely compared with, and preferred before all other spiritual works, but we are told that without it they are nothing. "On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets." That is, if we have charity and it runs through and gives life to our good works, then they are most valuable in the sight of God. And on the other hand, if we are wise enough to know all things, liberal enough to give all our goods to the poor, severe enough to burn our bodies and do all this without charity, we are nothing. Charity then is the very soul of all other virtues, running through them, vivifying them, giving them all their worth and value, and making them precious in the sight of God, hence it may truly be called the queen of virtues.

2. Charity points out our duties.—Yet charity does more than this. By pointing out what we must do, whether with regard to God or man, it may be said in this sense, to contain in itself and to embrace, all other good works. This we, may explain. Love is a habit of benevolence, which binds us to those whom creation has placed around us, whether in Heaven or on earth. It is the golden

cord which ties all hearts and wills together, and so unites them in holy friendship and justice, that there seems to be but one large heart; full of boundless and holy love. Thus it may be said, that in one sense, charity does not point to any special work of goodness, for it is ready to do all good to the loved one; whilst on the other hand it does point out most clearly our duties to others, who are placed in any special or peculiar position. Behold the picture of the wounded Jew on the way to Jericho; how clearly did the virtue of charity, point out to the good Samaritan, what he ought to do when he found his fellow man in such a strait. With a heart full of charity, his duty was clearly pointed out to him, and most nobly did he accomplish it, (St. Luke x.).

3. Charity differs from good-nature.—There is a clear distinction and a difference between charity and what the world calls good-nature. The latter is a quality in man which seems to rise, rather from his constitution than from his reason. It is subject very often to great passions and disorders, it acts according to likes and dislikes, it is too liberal in some cases, too miserly in others. It wants correcting in its very principles, and often springs from a weakness of mind, or a carelessness with regard to persons and things; it helps those whom it likes, it rejects those who have no special claim on its human affections; it is a passing,

fleeting, unstable thing, ruled by the various caprices that sway the human heart.

Charity on the contrary, is a regular, constant principle, neither subject to covetousness, anger, nor ambition. It is reason made perfect by grace, a love arising from a contemplation of the world, from a knowledge of its Creator, and the relation we bear to Him, and to our fellow creatures. It is that one virtue, into which all the duties from man to man flow, and in which they are contained; the one virtue which points out all our duties to God, and towards our fellow man, because he is a child of God. Well then did St. Paul say; "Without charity I am nothing."

4. Charity is not ostentatious.—If we examine our hearts and the motives of our actions, we may prehaps find, that our charity is not nearly so perfect, as we have hitherto imagined. Are we continually willing to show by practical deeds and not mere talk, that we are ready to love and help all men without distinction, and do we do so because they are children of God and He has told us to love and succour them? Are we ready even to pinch and impoverish self, and to share what we have with our brethren, whether it be little or great? If we have this spirit and practical deeds to prove its existence, then we may believe that charity has root in our hearts.

But there are many whose so-called charity con-

sists in mere talk without any deeds. They confine their charity to their own party, to some friends whom they like, whilst others may perish for all they care. There are some also, who do good to their brethren only that others may praise them, think them good, and say that they are charitable. This is not charity but pride and ostentation. The most wicked and the most ungodly may act in this manner, and yet have no regard to God or duty, and hence his act is valueless. There will be a reward for such deeds certainly, but the reward will be confined to this world; it will be what such men seek, the admiration and praise of men, and hence our Lord says to such: "Amen, I say, you have received your reward." This was the fault of the Pharisees, who sounded a trumpet to make men sensible of their alms; and they aimed principally at the applause of men, and fished for honour with their baits of so-called charity. But charity is not a mere feeling of compassion, for the brutes have this; it is not a mere feeling of party spirit but is wide and universal; it not only loves them that love us, but even those who despise and persecute us. It is not a natural but a spiritual love, a quality in which the whole character of Christ's followers may be summed up. "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

5. Charity considered in some of its effects.

Were we to consider things even in a temporal light, it would be easy to show, that nothing can be more profitable than the great law of universal Charity. Man we know is formed for society, and liable from his very constitution to several wants and necessities, and it is plain that he must often need the assistance of his brother man, in many occurrences of human life. How is this assistance to be procured? Through that great law of Christian charity, which under the most severe penalties, commands us to assist and help our brethren, in their wants, doubts and infirmities. In fact without this law, man would not be man as formed by God, because the instinctive principle, of doing to others as he would they should do to him, would be destroyed, and he would become a brute, a tyrant to his fellows. Indeed, it is from the inobservance of this great law, that all the miseries of mankind chiefly arise. Is not this want of observance, the cause of dissension, animosity, fraud and injustice? If we all loved our neighbour as this law ordains, who would ever dream of offending, molesting, or injuring his brother? Did we love our neighbour, we should always give, and always receive mutual aid, and man would appear always to us as a representative of the Divinity, as a child of God. Then the great would succour the weak, the rich would help the poor; envy, jealousy, and hate would depart from the world. The cold limbs of

misery would be warmed by benevolence, wealth like the sun, would never cease to diffuse its benign influence all around, and mankind would live on earth as in a terrestrial paradise; in union, in peace, in possession of all essential comforts of life; and death would then be as a door opening from a paradise here to a paradise of Heaven. Such indeed would be the effects of charity, even in this world, yet how much greater would they be in the next, since God has said that even the giving of a cup of cold water in His name, will be rewarded a hundredfold.

CHARITY SHOULD MAKE US MOST KIND TO THE SICK.

6. The Church's care of the sick.—Charity may indeed be practised in a thousand ways, but there is one branch of it, on which we now wish to dwell, and that is charity to the poor but especially the sick poor. Of old in by gone days, there was nothing more dear to the heart of our holy Mother the Church, than the care of the sick. In Catholic ages when the world was inspired by the sentiments of the Church, the care of the sick and dying, was one to which vast numbers of her children devoted their entire lives. How numberless were the Hospices then built, where the sick were cared for, how many the Religious Orders, whose subjects devoted themselves entirely to this work, and they thought it a boon to be allowed to tend and to dress

the wounds, of the feeble and the wretched. There were many, who like St. John of God, spent their whole lives and fortunes in the service of the sick and ailing. And though that day is somewhat darkened in England, still we must not think for a moment, that the Catholic Church has forgotton the sick and the wounded. Far from it; there are many holy Orders of religious men and women, who receive the sick and nurse them in their hospitals, whilst others go out and nurse the ailing in their own homes, without distinction of sect or creed. But go beyond the confines of England and this picture is more beautiful still, and the children of the Church are to be found everywhere, devoting their whole attention to the feeble and the lame. It may be a priest like another Father Damian, ministering and tending to the lepers, or the noble daughters of St. Dominic and St. Francis, who so ably and so fearlessly do the same. It may be the Sister who in the hospital drinks in the deadly fumes that rises from the fever stricken, or attends to the wounded on the battlefield: but wherever pain, misery, or sickness exist, there we find and, ever will find, the children of the Church, doing all they can to relieve and ameliorate it.

7. Charity urges us to imitate Christ in this.—Why some may ask, were these children of the Church, so devoted to the sick, and why did the Church so freely bless and so fully approve of their

work? The answer is, these devoted men and women, were not satisfied with simply observing the universal law of Charity, but they endeavoured in a special manner to imitate Our Lord, Who had a great and a special love for the sick. If we look at the life of Christ as set forth in the Gospels, we cannot but see this. Continually, wherever He came, He healed the sick and the lame, and no form of disease was ever presented before Him, that He did not cure. He gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, sanity to the mad, soundness to the leper; and the Evangelists record but one miracle after another; in fact Christ's love for the lame and the sick, was truly wonderful and astounding. His children then who remembered His words: "I have left you an example," as far as they could tried to imitate Him in this respect. But Our Lord not only cured the sick Himself, He also gave the power to do so to His Apostles, and thus entrusted to the Church in the persons of her earliest pastors, the care of the sick. When Christ sent His disciples out to preach He commanded them to heal the sick. "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils: freely have you received, freely give" (St. Matt. x. 8). Since that hour the Church has ever cherished the sick, and cared for them as one of her dearest treasures, and has blessed her children who have devoted themselves to the tending of the lame and

the ailing. Should not this urge us also to do our utmost for the sick? Should not we then, as well as others, do our best to help the sick by every means in our power, and thus also imitate Our Lord? As sons and daughters of the Church, should we not strive to imbibe the Church's spirit in this matter? Certainly we should, and we ought as far as possible, to emulate each other in helping the weak and the feeble.

8. Charity should make us see Christ in the sick.—Christ has told us, that whatever we do to the least of our brethren, He takes as done to Himself. "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me," (St. Matt. xxv. 40). All mankind are our brethren, all mankind are therefore objects of our charity. When charity knocks at your heart, remove natural pity and commiseration which are human virtues only, and turn your thoughts to Christ, and try to recognise Him in the persons of the sick, for what you do to them, He takes as done to Himself. Think of His commands to love all, think of His love to you, think how much you owe Him, and how little you pay back to Him in relieving His poor sick brethren His representatives. Then give freely, but without ostentation, without vanity what you have, and be sure that the Eternal Father will reward you in this world even, and will repay you a hundredfold. Surely, if Christ were to

appear in Person, and tell us that what we did for the sick we did for Him, not one of us would refuse to aid them. Yet we need not this, for we already have the words of Our Lord saying, that what we do for the sick we do for Him. "I was sick," He has said, "and you visited Me." And when men will enquire where they saw Him sick, He will answer: "Amen I say to you, that as often as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me" (St. Matt. xxv. 35-40).

9. Charity commands us to help the sick.—As we have seen, charity commands us most strictly to help everyone in their necessities. All are bound to give to the poor, and surely amongst these are the sick, the superfluous parts of their means, after the calls of family rank and condition have been attended to. This superfluity the Fathers of the Church have called "the Patrimony" of the poor. The debt then we owe to the poor sick, who are given into our charge, is as real a debt as any we contract. If we do not attend to the wants, the miseries, and sufferings of the ailing, we do not fulfil that law, which commands us to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. In the fifteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, the Lord speaking to the people says: "I command you to open your hand to your brother in want, and to the poor that dwell in your land." Notice the stern authoritative manner in which God speaks. It is not you should

do so, or you may do so, but; "I command you." When Our Lord spoke on the same subject He was still more emphatic. He draws a picture of the day of judgment and His condemnation of the wicked. "Depart," He says, "you accursed into everlasting fire;" and then He gives the reason for this. For, "I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink; I was naked, and you clothed Me not; sick and in prison, and you visited Me not." Upon asking where they had seen Him thus, He adds, "Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these My least brethren, you did it not to Me." (St. Matt. xxv.). Here we must notice with St. Augustine, that Our Lord does not condemn these souls because they have robbed their neighbour, but because they refused him assistance in his need, when they could, and ought to have given it; as if this want of charity, was the only crime that God would notice, or that it is so heinous, as to absorb and overwhelm all other crimes. The exercise of charity then, is the best way to draw down upon us, the mercies of God. What mercy, what gain, what benefit can be greater or compared to the possession of Heaven, yet listen to Our Lord. "Come you blessed of my Father, and possess the glory prepared for you, from the foundations of the world." Why does Christ thus invite those holy souls, was it because, they were pious, meek, godly

or honest? No, but because they were continually charitable to their poor, suffering, and forlorn brethren. "Come," says Christ, for, "I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was naked, and you covered Me; sick and in prison, and you visited Me." See then, how Our Lord includes amongst those who are objects of our charity, the sick especially, and therefore He points out in this manner, that you are not only to succour all who are in want, but especially the sick, who are quite unable to help themselves in any way.

Conclusion.—Brethren, need we say more. To-day you will be asked, to give part of your worldly means in order to help the sick. You have not received a vocation to go and tend them, like many of the Church's children, but those who have charge of them, earnestly ask your alms, that they may obtain all that these poor ailing ones require. Give freely then, give generously, give with a good heart. Try, in the person of the sick to see Our Lord Who has given you so much, and remember, that what you give you are but lending to the Lord Who will repay you with usury. In a week or so you will never miss what you give now. And what a happiness, what a consolation it will be for you, to hear at the moment of judgment the words of Christ Who will welcome you. "Come you blessed," for, "I was sick and you visited Me."

POPE AND KING.

SYNOPSIS.

Pope and King.

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—St. Matt. xvi. 18.

Introduction . . Love of Catholics for the Holy Father.

Foundation and History of the Temporal Power.
1. Italy at the mercy of the barbarians.
2. The gifts of Pepin and Charlemagne.

The Conquest was Just. The Gift Perpetual.
3. The conquest of the Kings was just.
4. The Popes were not ambitious to rule.
5. The gift was given to the Church.
6. The gift can never be alienated.

Why should the Pope be Temporal Ruler?
7. That he may freely exercise the duties of his office.
8. That his dominions might be a pattern to others.

Why was the Pope Deprived of the Temporal Power.
9. Through the Spirit of avarice.
10. Through a diabolical hatred of religion.

Conclusion . . Earnest prayer for the restoration of the temporal power.

POPE AND KING.

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—St. Matt. xvi. 18.

INTRODUCTION.

Love of Catholics for the Holy Father.—It is but natural, brethren, for the child to love its parent, and to show that love both in words and actions, when that parent is distressed, and were it not to do so, the world would cry it down, and deem it most inhuman. We need not wonder then, that the children of the Catholic Church so truly love their Spiritual Father, that aged and venerable Pontiff who now holds the place of Peter, and that frequently they send forth to him expressions of love, obedience and devotion. And if ever these expressions were required, to console the heart of the Holy Father, surely that hour is the present one. For, in our days men in high places are doing all they can to assail the Church, and others are aiding and encouraging them by secret machinations; whilst the powers of hell have risen in their greatest fury, and are doing their utmost to prevail against her. And to attack the Church is to attack the Holy Father, since he is her Vicar, and it must needs pain his loving heart, to see men kicking against the goad, to see them harass the Church

and strive to hinder the progress of her glorious work. But he knows well, that the wickedness of men and the powers of hell, will never overcome the Church, for God has declared that they never will. Evil men persecuted Christ, they put Him to death, but He rose glorious and triumphant on Easter Morn. So it is with the Church; men may pass laws that will harass and oppose her ministers, an infidel and irreligious press may speak against her, secret societies may plot and war against her: she may have a long Good Friday but in the end her Easter will come, and she will but rise before the world more grand and glorious, than she was before the men of this hour assailed her. Well does Leo know this, and bravely does this venerable man bear his sufferings. Yet how consoling to him amidst such troubles, must be the many expressions of affection, loyalty, and obedience, which he frequently receives from his devoted children. One of the troubles which must pain the Holy Father often, is the loss of the Papal Patrimony, the loss of the Temporal Power. Many Catholics, brethren, do not understand this matter, and are therefore unable to explain it to others, and we shall therefore dwell briefly upon it.

FOUNDATION AND HISTORY OF THE TEMPORAL POWER.

1. Italy at the mercy of barbarians.—The student of history will not have failed to note the

great contrast between the spirit of Christianity and the luxury of Rome, nor will he forget the terrible struggle between Christianity and Paganism, a struggle which lasted for centuries, but out of which the Christian faith, by the power of God came forth triumphant. Then came the conversion of Constantine, and the two great rulers of the world reigned in Rome. The one was spiritual, the other temporal. But after a time Constantine changed the seat of his power and government to Constantinople, and then at once burst in upon Italy, the barbarian hordes from the North of Europe, the Huns, the Goths, and the Vandals. Two commanders were sent from Constantinople, but their efforts were weak and feeble. Soon again came the Lombards, and when they attacked Rome, the people of Italy begged and prayed for the Emperor to come and save them, but their prayer was unheard. Message after message was sent but nothing was done, the Emperor had his hands full at home, and could not succour them.

2. The gifts of Pepin and Charlemagne.—Then it was that the people of Italy appealed to the Pope as their protector, and begged him to do something to save them from destruction. Stephen III. made a journey over the Alps to the King of France, and King Pepin came with his army and having driven out the Lombards, gave the land which he had secured by the right of conquest, to

the Pope as head of the Church. The king, by his victories had secured the land to himself, but now he who had saved Italy wished not to keep it, but presented it to the Church, and so these lands become the Patrimony of the Pope, as the successor of St. Peter. But later on the Lombards again attacked Rome, and once more the Pope, Pope Adrian urged by the people appealed to the King of the Franks, to Charlemagne the son of Pepin, and he brought an army over, drove out the enemy, and again renewed the gift made by his father, laying it on the tomb of the Apostles. Thus was confirmed and ratified the act of Pepin, and that part of Italy called the Patrimony of the Pope, was the temporal possession of the Sovereign Pontiff. The Pope was then, not only head of the Church but King of Rome and the surrounding country, just as any other sovereign rules in his own nation to-day.

THE CONQUEST WAS JUST: THE GIFT PERPETUAL.

3. The conquest of the kings was just.—Now if ever a conquest was just it was that of Pepin and Charlemagne. The Huns, the Goths, the Vandals, and the Lombards, had no right in Italy. They were enemies who came to pillage and destroy the nation, and had no right or title to it whatever. The true people of the country sought help from their superiors, their rulers at Constanti-

nople and received none. They then appealed to someone else, who came to them, fought for them and was successful, and therefore the conquest was a most just and proper one in every way. If we compare the conquests and annexations of any nation, with the details of these two French kings' conquests, we will find that none ever conquered another people, in a more just and honest way than did Pepin and Charlemagne. The rulers had left Italy to its fate, the enemy had no right there, and when the French conquered, it was theirs to annex, or to do what they wished with in any way.

4. The Popes were not ambitious to rule.—Again the Popes were not ambitious, nor did they in any way desire to rule; as a matter of fact it was forced upon them. The people of Rome loved the Pope, they looked upon him as their father and protector; they appealed to him, and he hesitated not to seek help from those who should have given it; and when refused here, he at once asked help from others, who could and did give it. This calling in of another monarch, is a clear proof that the Pope had no desire to rule, He knew the power of the king whose aid he sought, he knew that annexation or subjection to the French King might follow, yet he delayed not. Then when the land was offered to him, he only accepted it, because the people wished it; they looked upon him as their friend and protector, they had sent him to France, in their terrible

trouble, and now they were rejoiced to have him as their ruler. The Pope then yielded to their wishes, because they were his children and he loved them; and by becoming their king he could help them, keep them together, and drive out the barbarian and infidel hordes, who were in every way opposed to the religion of Christ.

5. The gift was given to the Church.—In the third place, the gift of land was not given to the Pope as a private individual, but as the successor of St. Peter the Head of the Church. In the deed which Pepin drew up, he distinctly stated that he made the gift for the good of his soul, for the remission of his sins, and out of love for the Sovereign Pontiff, who held the place of Jesus Christ on earth; and he gave this deed not into the hands of the Pope, but laid it on the tomb of the Apostles, that it might be held in trust by the Popes, and handed down to their successors for ever. And when Charlemagne like his father overcame the Lombards, he renewed all that had been done, using ever more emphatic language. When ambassadors from Constantinople came and begged him to rule over the land himself, he replied: "It was not for my sake, it was not for glory, but simply for the honour of God, for the remission of my sins, for the good of my soul, that I have taken this journey. I exposed myself to dangers, I have conquered these people, and nothing will induce me

to take it back again from him to whom I have given it." Clearly then we see, that Charlemagne, confirmed and renewed his father's gift to the Church.

6. The gift can never be alienated.—Since the gift then, was not a personal one but was given to the Pope as Head of the Church, he is therefore but a trustee, and is bound as far as possible to hand it on to his successors. If any property were entrusted to us, and we were told to hold it in trust for another person, we could not in justice, use it for our own benefit, or give it away to another. How then can the Pope give up that, which for so many generations of men, he has received from the hands of his predecessors, how can he give up that of which he is but a trustee? Physical force may snatch it from him, but he will protest as loudly as he can, and never cease demanding it back again; he will never cease protesting against this gross outrage, persecute and harass him as wicked men will. The Pope can act as Pope without the Temporal Power, but he will never yield in the struggle concerning it. Again the gift being given to the Church, it belongs to the whole Catholic world at large, and the question therefore of the Temporal Power, does not concern this or that nation, it is not a national but a cosmopolitan question; not a question for Italy alone, but for the whole world at large. Hence no matter what complaints the

Italian brigands and robbers foisted on the world, they had no just grounds, for seizing by brute force, the temporal possessions of the Pope; and in doing so, they have not seized that which belonged to any individual, but that which belonged to the Catholic Church, and the Church is not Italy, but the entire Catholic world. And be it noted, that, the possessions belong, not alone to the Catholic world which exists at the present moment, but to the Catholic world that is to come; for the Church being perpetual, that which is hers now, should in justice be hers till the end of time, and therefore her childrens till time is no more.

WHY SHOULD THE POPE BE TEMPORAL RULER?

7. That he may freely exercise the duties of his office.—And now you might ask, why should the Pope be a temporal as well as spiritual ruler? There are many reasons, but we will merely mention a few. First of all, man was created for eternal happiness and bliss, and was placed in this world in a state of probation. But during his time in this world, two powers are to rule him, two powers are to guide him. The one is spiritual, the other temporal. The civil power is co-ordinate with the spiritual, both work on different planes. The spiritual authority in this world, is represented by the Church, and the Pope who is Head of the Church, and the civil is represented by the Prince, and the servants under him. The two powers

then are widely different The spiritual looks to Heaven, the temporal is concerned with things of this earth. Consequently it is both fitting and proper for the Pope to be temporal ruler, since he might otherwise fall into the hands of some arbitrary prince, and thereby be hindered from freely exercising the duties of his office. The Vicar of Christ has a right to complete personal immunity, and should be freely allowed to exercise all that pertains to his office. This belongs to him by Divine Law, since it is essential to him, for the proper exercise, of that Supreme religious authority, which has been given him by Our Lord. How could he exercise that authority were he the subject of any despotic or tyrannical prince or the subject of any prince, or nation? What is the action of any prince that rejects Catholicism? He attempts to prohibit all the actions of the Pope's officials in his dominions, he will not allow Papal Decrees an entrance into his country, and he banishes those who attempt to bring them in, or who would carry out what the decrees command. Fancy for a moment, the Pope being a subject of the German nation during the time of Luther. Fancy him being a subject of England, in the reign of Henry VIII. What would it have meant? Would he have been free to exercise his supreme authority, would the supernatural or spiritual power have been above the civil? No, from the existence of

the reformers penal laws, and from the punishments and torture meted out to other Catholics, we may safely conclude, that the Pope would have been most harshly treated, if not put to death. But even in more peaceable times than these, the Pope would have but little, if any influence over men, were he the subject of any nation, and we see this clearly proved by the utter helplessness of many heads of other national so-called Churches, when they are in the hands of princes, and subject to the nation's laws. Here then is one reason why the Pope should be a temporal ruler, because subjection to the civil power, would hamper and hinder, the full, and free exercise, of that supreme power and authority which Christ gave him. Hence the establishment of the Temporal Power was brought about by Divine Providence. Almost before the barbarian hordes, brought about the breaking up of the map of Europe, when Charlemagne had taken so much of the lands that had been ruled over by Constantine the Temporal Power of the Pope was established. Where would the Pope have been now, what would have become of religion, if the barbarians or the many nations that have rebelled against the Church, had had it in their power? No doubt they would have done all they could, to have destroyed both the Church and its Head, but we have the assurance of Christ that they would never have succeeded.

8. That his dominions might be a pattern to others.—Again Divine Providence, destined the lands over which the Pope ruled, to be a pattern and an example to others, and the germ which was to spread a supernaturalised civilisation over the entire world. God so willed, that these lands should become the first portion of human society, which was fully rendered obedient to the Christian laws. In them the germs of true civilisation were produced. They were the first to receive the Christian law of marriage, the abolition of slavery, the Christian education of children, the just arbitration of judges, mutual respect and fair dealing between man and man. They were to become, the first provinces of that Christian world which has now grown into maturity. The Christian civilisation which ripened in them, became the leaven which united the nations of Christian Europe. Where then were France, Spain, Germany or England? They were races divided and in conflict, wild and ferocious, some had almost sunk back into paganism, others had not yet emerged from it. But the seed of Christian progress ripened in the lands ruled by the Pope, and were then scattered broadcast into the furrows of Europe. Spain invaded by the Saracens and infested by the Jews, and divided by strife into petty kingdoms, was knit together into one great people by the Council of Toledo. England with its Heptarchy, or seven kingdoms in continual

conflict, when the one faith, the one law came, when the one Supreme Pastor was known, became united and blended together into one great nation, and the Christian Monarchy of England won and endures till the present day. What the Church did in England and Spain she did in other countries, and thus gradually she moulded and built up Christian Europe. What was preached to the savage and inferior races was practised in the dominions of the Pope, and these lands stood out as a pattern to the whole world, and their laws, customs and ways were copied by other nations and races, and they thus gradually civilised Europe. In these lands under the loving rule of the Sovereign Pontiffs, arts and sciences were taught, supported and encouraged, and all that was good in civilization propagated.

WHY THE POPE WAS DEPRIVED OF THE TEMPORAL POWER.

9. Through the spirit of avarice.—It may be asked why was the Pope deposed, and the Temporal Power taken from him? To answer this question we must ask another. Why do we so often read in history of highly civilised nations, sending out their soldiers into savage lands, slaying the natives and annexing their country? Read the conquests made by Spain and Portugal, and other nations, and it will almost make you shudder. They sent out their leading generals with a large force, and all the machines of war then known, and,

when they had blown a great many of the natives out of existence, they seized their lands and kept the remainder of them in cruel bondage. What made these men so cruel, so terrible towards the poor savage who had not injured them? It was their avaricious spirit, their love of gain, that wish to make their nation great, and in doing so to enrich themselves. It was this spirit which moved the evil men in Italy. With a jealous greedy eye they looked upon the Pope's Patrimony, if they could only abolish the Temporal Power of the Pope and unite their lands with his, then they would be great and powerful, and a King might reign over "united Italy." Therefore they took every opportunity to help on secret societies, political adventurers, and every other means that came to hand, and when the storm burst, they failed not to send their allies to help the malcontents. Asassination, lies, deceit, and treachery were nothing so long as they gained their end. It would take too long to follow the events of the struggle, but they knew well, the loving heart of Pius IX., that he would have as little blood shed as possible, but the few battles which did take place, went to show, that had not the Pope forbidden further hostilities his army would have blown the rebellious crew almost out of existence.

10. Through a diabolical hatred of religion But there was, and is again to day, another spirit,

which moved these kind of men to robbery and crime. Besides that avarice which we have mentioned, there was that Satanic hatred of religion, which has ever been present in the world. Remember Christ told His disciples, that because they were His, and bore His Name, the world would hate and persecute them; yea, the hour would come, when men would put them to death, and think they were doing a service of God. Persecution then was the heritage Christ left to His Church, and we need not be surprised that the devil has, and still does, instigate men to attack the Pope, the Head of Christ's Church. Secret societies, and other classes of men who used dark and insiduous means, were the tools employed by Satan; deceit, treachery and lies, were promulgated and practised by men, who had a bitter and hellish hatred of religion and all belonging to it. They thought, that if they dethroned the Pope, his power, and the Church would fall, to rise no more. Was it not said, "The Pope is dead there will be no more Popes now." Poor deluded creatures, man acts one way but God employs another. When the Jews put Christ to death, they thought they would hear no more of Him; but on Easter morn He rose triumphant, and the Jews became wanderers and were scattered over the nations of the earth. So with the Pope. They may have dethroned him, by brute force they have robbed him of the Temporal Power, they may still

persecute him, but he is still head of the Church and can act as such. The Church under his loving guidance may suffer, but she will increase most wonderfully as she is doing today. And though in many respects this is her Good Friday and a long one too, yet, we are sure her Easter Day will come, when she will have in every way triumphed over her enemies. They will have perished, but she will remain then as ever, immovable, because she is founded on Peter, the Rock. The Holy Father will not alone be Pope, but with his lands restored, his Temporal Power given back to him, he will be as he has been before, both Pope and King.

Conclusion.—Brethren, we need not ask you, to be loyal, obedient, and affectionate children of the Holy See, for such you are; but we ask that as often as your thoughts are fixed upon the Holy Father, that Illustrious Prisoner in the Vatican, you will pray earnestly to God not alone to succour the venerable Pontiff and enable him to bear his present sufferings, but also pray to the Eternal Father, that in His own holy way, He may once more restore to the Holy Father the Patrimony of Peter, the Temporal Power, so that he may have full liberty to carry out with the greatest perfection, the sacred functions and duties of his high and glorious office, so that he may be again as he was before, Pope and King.

AMBASSADORS OF CHRIST.

SYNOPSIS.

The Ambassadors of Christ.

"Thou art a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech."—Heb. v. 6.

Introduction . . The leaders of Christ's army.

The Jewish Priesthood
1. Priests of the earliest times.
2. The Mosaic Priesthood.

The Christain Priesthood
3. The Priests of the New Law.
4. The Priests power comes from God.
5. The call to the Priesthood.
6. The training for the Priesthood.

The Function of the Christian Priesthood
7. Preaching the Gospel.
8. Offering Sacrifice.
9. Power of forgiving sins.

Conclusion . . Reflections consoling to the faithful but terrible to the the Priest. Respect him, obey him, love and pray for him.

AMBASSADORS OF CHRIST.

"Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech." —Heb. v. 6.

INTRODUCTION.

The leaders of Christ's army.—Nothing my brethren, can be more wonderful, than the establishment and progress of the Christian faith. Confined in the beginning to a very few, and these few poor and illiterate, it spread from Jerusalem to the adjacent countries, and thence to the remotest parts of the earth. That the hand of God, was here in this great work, is clear to the impartial student. For what was to be done to establish the Christian religion in the world? It was necessary to abolish the superstitions of paganism; to remove the errors and prejudice of mankind; to give them new maxims and sentiments; in a word, to change the whole face of the earth. In this great work, it was necessary to contend with the abuses of power, the false wisdom of philosophers, and the corruption of libertines and unbelievers. But what were the chief means, that God used to accomplish this most astounding work? It was chiefly accomplished by the preaching and suffering of the Apostles, twelve poor fishermen, with neither credit nor fortune to

support them. But the hand of God was with them, His eyes ever upon them; for Christ had bade them go and continue His work, and He promised them His continual protection. "All power," He said, "is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20). Behold then, the chief means employed by Our Lord, to bring about the conversion of the world. The Apostles went forth and did their work nobly and well, and to-day under the same Divine protection their lawful successors continue that work. What a sublime task then has Christ confided to the ministers of His Church, to what a sublime dignity has He raised them. They are the captains and leaders of His army, the pastors over His flocks, the physicians with heavenly medicines to heal their wounds and disorders; and we owe much to them, though many of us fail to remember, and realize this.

THE JEWISH PRIESTHOOD.

1. Priests of the earliest times.—When the world was yet an infant, when society was not organised, when each family was a body in itself answerable to no higher authority; then the father

of the family as its head, was supreme in spiritual as in temporal matters, he was priest and ruler. But time passed on, and families became united, and combined in power to form the state, and to that state was transferred the power in spiritual things, and the head of that government, was not only king but priest as well. Hence we read of Melchisedech king of Salem, offering up bread and wine in Sacrifice (Gen. xiv. 18), but we must understand, that he did this, not by virtue of his royal power, but by reason of the priestly office entrusted to him. Thus indeed, though these two offices might be held by one representative, yet their natures and powers were ever most distinct.

2. The Mosaic Priesthood.—But the time came, when God Who till now had ruled the world, by adding to the natural law written on man's heart, deigned to give the world the Mosaic dispensation, and with it the Mosaic Priesthood. From amidst the throng of men, he chose Aaron and his descendants, and to them he restricted, the power and functions of the priestly office. They were consecrated by Moses, according to the minute ritual laid down in the Book of Leviticus; and henceforth, so jealously was their right regarded, that the stranger who dared to infringe on it, or who dared to take upon himself that office, was to be punished with death. "Thou shalt appoint Aaron and his Sons, over the service of the priest-

hood. The stranger that approacheth to minister shall be put to death" (Num. iii. 10). God confirmed this choice again and again, by the swift and terrible punishments which He hurled upon those, who dared to touch the priestly rights. King Ozias, mighty in power and victories, would thrust himself into the office of the priest, and though warned, being full of pride he persisted and would offer incense. But lo, scarcely had he touched the censor, when his face was white with leprosy, and he lost his crown and died (2 Par. xxvi. 20). Core, Dathan, Abiron and their adherents, for a like offence, beheld the earth open at their feet, and it swallowed them up alive, as though into the very jaws of hell (Num. xvi. 31-33). Such was the Jewish Priesthood, Divinely instituted and handed down from father to son, and behold how jealously God defended its rank, inflicting the most severe pain upon intruders who were not called to it as Aaron was.

THE CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD.

3. The Priests of the new law.—And now what is the Christian Priesthood? It is that body of men supernaturally called by God, and endowed with power and grace, to consecrate the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, to forgive sins, and to minister to the wants of God's faithful people. Its dignity is far beyond that of the Mosaic Priesthood;

it surpasses that order, as much as the Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood Which it offers, surpasses the sacrifices of goats and lambs, that were slain on the Jewish altars. So sublime is this Priesthood, so grand its dignity, so awful its duties, and terrible its responsibilities, that when we contemplate it, we are lost in awe and wonder. Eloquent indeed are the words of holy writers describing the dignity of this sacred office, but it will be sufficient here to point out, that God has ordained and instituted the Priesthood to work for men's salvation, and few indeed are they who fully realise all we owe to it. If we think but a moment of the fact, that all the graces and blessings which the Church bestows upon us, from the moment of our Baptism till our last breath, nearly all come to us through the hands of the priest, then perhaps we shall understand, the wonderful grace that elevates him to such a height, and gives him powers so vast and vital to the welfare of mankind.

4. The Priest's power comes from God.—Remember that the priest derives all his power and authority from God. As Baptism makes the child a Christian, as Confirmation makes him a soldier of Christ, and stamps his soul with characters which can never be effaced, so the Sacrament of Holy Orders makes a man a priest, and once a priest he is a priest for ever, and will be so throughout all eternity. The character of the Priesthood is

stamped upon his soul, and its impress will remain there for ever, either as a ray of glory in the light of Heaven, or as a scarlet letter burning deeply into his soul in hell. When Christ sent forth His Apostles and disciples to convert the world, He gave them His own authority, He gave them the powers of the Priesthood. After His Resurrection Christ spoke thus to the Apostles: "All power is given to Me in Heaven and in earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20). Again He said to them: "As the Father hath sent Me I also send you," and having breathed on them He added, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained" (St. John xx. 21-23). Already at His Last Supper, when He had changed the bread and wine into His Most Sacred Body and Blood, He said; "Do this for a commemoration of Me" (St. Luke xxii. 19). Thus do we see Our Lord sending out His Apostles, His first priests, with the power to baptize, to forgive sins, to consecrate His Body and Blood, and to preach everywhere, to every creature. But more than this, He not only sends out His priests with

these powers but He gives them His own authority, "As the Father sent Me I also send you," that is with the same power and authority, to compel men to listen to them, as they would were it Himself Who spoke. And still further does Christ go: "He that heareth you, heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me" (St. Luke x. 16). "Go," He said, "and continue my work. The Father sent Me with all power and authority, and now I give you that same power, that same authority, and send you out to convert the world. Go and preach, baptize, offer Sacrifice, and forgive sins, and labour to save souls. And since your work must continue as long as there are souls on earth, behold I will remain with you and your lawful successors, by My protection, by My inspiration, by the presence of the Paraclete Whom I will send you, I will remain with you till the world is no more." Behold then the source from which the priest derives his power and authority, behold what that power and authority is. Well then may they cry out to you in the words of St. Paul: "For Christ therefore we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us" (2 Cor. v. 20). Truly are priests the ambassadors of Christ, His representatives His mouthpieces to teach the world.

5. The call to the Priesthood.—The Christian Priesthood differs from the Jewish in the method of its calling. The Spirit of God moveth where It

will, and we can find no absolute rule, according to which God grants vocations. But this we do know, that, "No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called by God as Aaron was" (Heb. v. 4). Young and old, rich and poor are chosen; though indeed the Sons of the Sanctuary often are chosen from the ranks of the poor, that order in which their Master chose to dwell whilst on earth. Then He loved to be amongst the poor, now He draws them closely to Himself, and showers down upon them this His choice gift. God gives a soul a vocation and at once it feels an attraction for the sanctuary, a yearning for His service. Ever and anon there is a voice speaking to the heart, calling as it did of old to the Apostles: "Come follow Me." This vocation is a most precious gift of God, one which may be trampled underfoot in the mire of sin, but one which should be fed by continual prayer. Many indeed are the vocations frustrated, many the calls that have been silenced, many are the souls now out in the world, that should have been in the sanctuary. Tongues that now speak politics or flattery, hands that greedily grasp this world's goods, should have been preaching the Word of God, should be holding the Body and Blood of Christ. But no, these vocations were lost, perhaps hindered by parents; and only on the last day when they have to be accounted for, shall we know their number. God calls the future apostle and

bids him go forth from his father's home, to prepare to labour in strange places. Had you seen Christ going about our land as He did about the valleys of Judea and the shores of Galilee; had you heard Him call the sons of Zebedee and tell them to follow Him; had you listened to Him telling Peter that He would make him a fisher of men: had you seen and heard these things, and known to what a great work He was inviting them, with what awe and love, would you have listened to Him. Yet even as the Apostles were called and sent by God, so is the Catholic priest. That call may come at any time; it may be softly whispered to childish hearts, when still near the mother's knee; and louder and louder it calls as the years pass on, till the child hears it and willingly obeys. Perhaps Christ may call when man is in the summer of life, and as it were make an apostle from a sinner, just as He did Saul of Tarsus, who was called whilst going to harass the Christians of Damascus. Whenever the call does come, the Levite should listen, rise and obey in all things, and follow Christ.

6. The training for the Priesthood.—We know that when Our Lord called His Apostles, He Himself watched over and trained them, so also the successors of these same Apostles, watch over and train the future priest. After the call or vocation, come the long years of Seminary life, a life of retirement from the world, in which the youth is

trained and formed in the spirit and study of every pious thought and habit. Here he drinks in now more than ever, the wisdom and the holiness, which he must afterwards pour out upon others. His life here in the Seminary is one of strict discipline, obedience, hard work, prayer and study. Nothing that can in any way fit him for the ministry, is left out or neglected. And do not think as some do, that he knows nothing of what men of the world study and practise, that the sciences, the various hypothesis evolved in this so-called intellectual time of ours, are unknown to him. In fact this is one of the special things which is especially taken notice of in his training, and therefore he is prepared to meet, as he has to, every objection that men of science and learning can bring against religion. In order then to defend his holy faith, the faith which he has to teach to others, he studies earnestly, not alone religion but every thing that can oppose it. No other class of men devote such a length of preparation for the ministry, as Catholic students for the Priesthood. Ten, twelve, and even fourteen years of earnest hard study, both of religion, and what may be called secular sciences, are quite common, quite the usual course. This has been admitted by the leading infidels and atheists of the day. They recognise the priests as God's representatives, and single them out for attack. But just as a Froude meets Father Tom. Burke, as an Ingersoll meets Father

Lambert, and both historian and infidel are crushed like an empty egg-shell in the hand of a strong man, so it often happens to others who attack the Ambassadors of Christ.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD.

7. Preaching of the Gospel.—One of the first duties of the Priest, is to preach the Faith, to instruct the people. "Faith cometh by hearing, and how can they hear without a preacher, and how can they preach without being sent?" (cf. Rom. x). The Priest inherits the command given by Christ to His Apostles. "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (St. Mark xvi. 15). So when he ascends the pulpit it is ever as the minister of God, not to give his own views, not to pander to the tastes of his audience, not to discourse on some vague topic of the hour; no, he stands there as the mouthpiece, the spokesman of the Church, as one whom Christ has sent to preach, as one from whose lips the people must receive faith, "by hearing." He stands there as the Ambassador of Jesus Christ, in his official capacity he is, "the authorised voice of a watchful and infallible Church, and responsible to that Church for every word he utters." It is not the individual who gives power or force to the words he utters, but it is God Who speaks through the priest. "He that heareth you heareth Me" (St. Luke x. 16). This it

is that fills the priest with zeal, this inflamed the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who describes his own preaching as, "not in length of speech, nor in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the shewing of the Spirit and power; that your faith might not stand on the wisdom of men, but upon the power of God" (1 Cor. ii.). Be careful then, never to listen carelessly to the priest in the pulpit, lest you offend God. "He that heareth you, heareth Me, he that despiseth you, despiseth Me."

8. Offering Sacrifice.—The priest is ordained to offer Sacrifice, the August Sacrifice of the Holy Mass. No saint, nor all the saints in Heaven and on earth, could ever give God as much honour, as the priest does by saying one Holy Mass, for they are all finite but It is infinite. We are filled with wonder when we read that Josue (x. 12) bade the sun stand still and that it obeyed him. But how much more wonderful is the fact, that when the priest pronounces the words of Consecration, the Incarnate Word, the Son of God, comes into his hands under the Sacramental species, that Jesus comes down upon the Altar as often as the priest wills it! He is under the will of the priest who moves Him from place to place, encloses Him in the tabernacle, distributes Him to the faithful or carries Him to the sick. He is like the most helpless creature in the priest's hands. May we not cry out

with St. Augustine: "Oh, sacred dignity of the priest, in whose hands as in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, God again becomes Incarnate."

9. Power of forgiving sins.—As the priest has power over Christ's real Body, so too has he power over Christ's mystical body, the faithful. He has the power of the keys, the power of forgiving sins, of delivering the sinners from the bonds of Satan, and making them once more the children of God. "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained" (St. John xx. 23). This is another of the priest's functions. God has bound Himself to abide by the decision of the priest in the Confessional, to pardon or refuse pardon as His minister does, provided always that the penitent be capable of it. The sentence of the priest precedes and God subscribes to it. The Archangel Michael, may drive away the demons that encircle the bed of the dying man, but he cannot forgive sin. No one but God and the priest can do that. How wonderful the power, how good, how loving of God, to grant such to His priests for the benefit of the faithful.

Conclusion.—Reflections such as these, brethren on the nature and power of the Priesthood, should be consoling to you, since by the Priesthood God has placed Himself so near you, and showered down so many graces and blessings upon you. Ah, brethren, to the individual priest these superhuman

powers and privileges entrusted to him are terrifying. As he realises the terrible height to which God has raised him, he also remembers the terrible account which will one day be asked from him. Respect your priests then, for they are worthy of your respect, on account of the dignity of their office and the functions they perform. Obey them, because they are employed by God, to direct, instruct, and correct you. Love and pray for them always because they love you, and each is your father, your friend and counsellor, and since their duties are important, their task is difficult. Fail not then to pray for, to love and respect, those to whom God has said: "Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech."

THE END OF ALL.

SYNOPSIS.

The End of All.

"*In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin.*"—Eccles. vii. 40.

Introduction . . God, and our parents' fall.

We should Prepare for and often think of Death.

1. Religion teaches us to die well.
2. Few ever think of their last end.
3. The death bed scene.
4. Wealth and power useless to the dead.
5. The death sentence passed.
6. Death certain yet uncertain.
7. Death bed conversions deceitful.

Conclusion . . We must be ever ready.

THE END OF ALL.

"*In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin.*"—Eccles. vii. 40.

INTRODUCTION

God, and our Parents' fall.—We read, brethren, that on that sad day when our first parents fell and offended their Creator, God appeared to them and demanded an account of their sin. And when He Who had made man from the slime of the earth, had heard from their lips the particulars of their crime, then He said to them: "Dust thou art, and into the dust shalt thou return" (Gen. iii. 19). These words were not spoken to Adam as an individual, but as the head of, and representative of all mankind, and are therefore to be applied to all his descendants, to every child of the human race. They point out that man whose body was made from the earth, will one day suffer dissolution, and that for a time this same body, will return to and mingle with the earth from whence it came. But the soul that dwelt within that body, will at once take flight to the bar of Eternal Justice, there to give an account of the man's whole life, and to receive the sentence which will either confer upon it eternal bliss, or hurl it into the everlasting

torments of hell. What an awful, what a supreme moment is this then. The moment of our dissolution, the moment of death, means so much for us, and will be the end of all for us, so far as this world is concerned. Let us consider it.

WE SHOULD PREPARE FOR AND THINK OFTEN OF DEATH.

1. Religion teaches us how to die well.—Religion has for its end our sanctification and salvation. It teaches us how, whilst we are here on earth, we must love and serve God, that hereafter we may reign with Him in Heaven. In other words, it teaches us how to live well, so that we may die well. The moment of death is the most critical moment for each of us, for even the Judgment that follows after, is not so dreadful when preceded by a holy death. Death is simply this, the pathway or gate, through which man either enters into Heaven or hell. This will show us then, the importance of our text. We must ever remember the end for which we were created, we must continually think about it, so that the thought of it may keep us from sin. The body indeed must return to the earth, but the soul must stand before God's tribunal to be rewarded or condemned. And if in that moment which goes before this solemn trial, we are found just, then all is well, for a happy, holy death, means a favourable sentence, but if we are found in grave sin, then woe to us for ever.

2. Few think of their last end.—If we look around the world, and weigh up its sayings and doings; if we watch the mighty crowd of beings that flit about upon the earth's surface, we might ask if such beings think this world is eternal. Men and women of every rank and age, the rich and poor, the little and the great, all seem so active and busy from morn till night; and day after day they rush hither and thither, with careworn looks and anxious faces, busy about a thousand things, which seem to absorb their very souls. Will this never end, and and do they think of their end? If you listen to their words, you will find that death or their last end, is the furthest thing from their thoughts. You will hear them planning out what they are going to do, next month, next year, and for several years yet to come. They are too busy about the things of this world, too busy and eager to get a rich luxurious means of living, even to think about dying. If the thought does come sometimes it quickly passes like the lightning's flash. How foolish this is, since they must one day, perhaps soon, leave this earth and all it has. Such people are grasping at the shadow and avoiding the substance.

3. The death bed scene.—Let us go aside and look at another picture in the world's history. Whilst all is bustle and hurry without, let us turn and enter the chamber of death. Cast your eyes upon that pallid frame of a man, in whom life is almost

extinct. Those sunken cheeks and half glaring eyes, those drops of cold perspiration which rest on the forehead, the restless tossing, and the difficult breathing: all indicate that the fatal moment is fast approaching. Around the death bed are weeping relatives, looking on with silent awe, yet eagerly praying that this dear one may be spared to them. Nothing is heard save the painful breathing of the dying man, and the solemn voice of God's minister, in the name of the Church, bidding that soul to go forth and meet its God. A moment more and the limbs of the dying man begin to quiver, his eyes open as if to take one last farewell look, the hands grasp at the empty air, there is one last sigh, the head falls back, then all is over. The voice of prayer has just sunk into silence, and the attendants in terror whisper to each other; "He is dead, he is gone." A piercing cry rends the air, as the loving wife learns the dread news, that the lover of her youth, and the husband of her womanhood is no more; that she is left alone in this cold cruel world to win bread for herself and her fatherless children. This man was a short time ago perhaps, one of the motley crowd that we have seen rushing about outside. Did he think of his end, was he prepared for this awful moment? God knows; and let us hope he was, he could not have prepared too well.

4. Wealth and power useless to the dead.—But turn again to the bed of death, and behold that

lifeless piece of clay, whose spirit has gone to stand before the God Who made it. Where now is all that it lived for, all its wealth, its pleasures, its beauty? It must leave all behind now. Clothe the poor body with the richest robes, and it cannot feel them nor use them. Fill the hands with gold, and they cannot hold it. Prepare the daintiest and most delicate food, and it cannot partake of it. Look at its features, there is little beauty there, soon in the grave all its beauty will vanish. And where was this man's power, why did it allow death to approach him? Ah, because his power was useless, and could not contend with death. All he had, all he laboured so hard for he must now leave behind, they are to him as nothing. His dead body cannot enjoy them, and his soul has gone to give an account of them all, and woe to it, if there be anything that has not God's blessing upon it.

5. The death sentence passed.—This is death, the separation of the body and the soul. Go back now in spirit to Eden, and contemplate the parent of the human race as he came from the hands of his Maker. The virginal earth produces all that he requires, and the brute creation rests meekly at his feet. All nature is subject to him, and his own passions are subject to his reason. He reigns here in an earthly paradise, free from sorrow and all evil, and in a few short years he will go to reign with God for ever. But the wily serpent tempts Eve, she

falls and Adam falls with her, and God's sentence falls upon them like a thunderbolt. Sorrowing and weary, they are driven forth from their happy home, with the words of their Maker ringing in their ears: "Dust thou art and into dust shalt thou return."

6. Death certain yet uncertain.—Thus was the sentence of death passed upon our first parents, and through them upon our race. From that hour death is the portion of every child of Adam. Rich and poor, young and old, all must go down into the earth from which they originally sprang. The greatest men and women that the world has seen, have fallen into the grave, there to mingle with the earth, until that last great day when the angel will call them all to Judgment. Nothing is more certain than this; nay the very hour, the very moment of our death is fixed in God's eternal decrees, and many who have passed the meridian of life, are already on the downward path to the grave. What is history, but the record of fleeting lives each of which ends with death, with an exit from this world. The greatest men that have lived, who seem to have swayed the world just as they wished, they have passed away and the very names of many are forgotten. They each have gone, their spirits live on in eternity, but their bodies have paid the penalty of Eden's curse. But why wander so far, have we not proof enough at home? Has not death appeared perhaps in our midst, and taken from us a much

loved friend, a father or a mother? Has not the wife lost her husband, the young mother her babe, the widow her only son? Yes, we have proof enough, and we know by experience, that all must die. Nothing can alter this, for dust we are and into dust we must return.

Yet, evident though this be, who can tell the day, the hour of our death. Known only to God, it is hidden from us, and we may die at any moment, like the little flower bitten by an early and sudden frost. We pride ourselves on life, we plan the future, but we know not whether we shall ever live to see it. How do men die? Are they warned that their end is near? No, there is the warning given by Our Lord when He says: "Watch and pray for you know not the day nor the hour" (St. Matt. xxv. 13). The Son of Man shall come like a thief in the night, at an hour when you least expect it. This is the warning of Christ and it shows that the moment of death is uncertain. Death will steal upon us, just as the thief breaks in upon those who are not thinking of him.

7. Death bed conversions deceitful.—But how do men prepare for death? Alas, many lead a life of sin, and leave their conversion as they call it till the moment almost of death. To some there comes a short bitter sickness, which warns them that the end is not far distant. Then they would turn to God, but how can man prepare in a short

time, for that which he ought to have prepared for during his whole life, how then can he in a few days or hours undo the evils of a life time? The Holy Spirit warned him and said: "In all thy works remember thy last end," but he has not done so. Indeed, in very few of his works did he ever think of his last end, and now, only because death is near does he strive to prepare for it. Ah, indeed, God's mercy is great but His justice is wonderful, and these death bed repentances are most deceitful and dangerous. Never for a moment trust to them but be ever ready, for we know not when we shall die, nor how, nor where we shall meet death. It may steal upon you gradually, it may strike you quite suddenly, you cannot tell.

Even though sickness come to you, still life is not despaired of. Friends will deceive you through their false love; there will scarcely be one found brave enough to send for the priest, or to tell you that death is near. They will be afraid to give you pain, they will let time pass, and you will be utterly taken by surprise in the end. And one thing which many wise men notice is this; that, the man who has lived when he was well and in health as though he were never to die, that man can hardly ever be persuaded he is dying, until death actually stares him in the face. And almost at the last moment comes the terrible danger of despair. "Oh," the dying man will cry out, "can God pardon such awful

sins as mine? Ah, I am afraid I am lost already." With a sorrowing heart, the priest bids the poor dying man not to fear, but to trust and hope in that God Who pardoned the penitent thief. He bids him remember that he is another prodigal son, going to a Father Who loves him, a Father Who if he is really sorry and repentant like the prodigal in the Gospel, will clothe him with happiness and glory.

And again how often do such men die when no priest is near. There is no voice to breathe into his ear acts of love and sorrow; no one to listen to and disentangle the long tale of woe, misery, and sin; no anointed hand to bless, no sacerdotal lips to pronounce, the sacred words of Absolution and forgiveness. No, but the demons are there, demons tempting, demons disturbing that poor soul, and putting every possible obstacle in its way. If they have conquered this poor soul in the past, may they not conquer now? Ah, how fearful, how foolish a thing it is, to go through life without thinking continually of death and preparing for it. Terribly dangerous and deceitful are death-bed repentances, trust them not.

Conclusion.—What follows then, brethren, from all this? There can be but one true conclusion, one leading thought which ought to fill our souls. Since we have to die, and the moment of death is uncertain, then we must be ever ready to die. We must then continually think about death and

what follows it, and let these thoughts influence not a few, but every work of ours, whether they be thoughts, words or actions. By so doing, surely we shall avoid sin, for no one will freely sin when he realises, that after death he will be judged for his crimes and may lose his soul. Listen then to the words of the Holy Spirit: "In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin."

DO CATHOLICS READ THE BIBLE?

SYNOPSIS.

Do Catholics Read the Bible?

"*Understanding this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation.*—2 St. Peter i. 20.

Introduction . . God and the Written Word.

The origin and History of the Bible.
1. Christ and the Apostles preach.
2. The Apostles write the New Testament.
3. The Catholic Church gives the Bible to the world.

The Church's care of the Bible.
4. Her care to prevent errors.
5. The Catholic Church preserved the Bible.

Did the Catholic Church keep the Word of God from the People?
6. The Church's wish to make the Bible known.
7. Early written editions of the Bible.
8. Early printed editions of of the Bible.
9. The Church prohibits the reading of erroneous translations.

Conclusion . . Prepare to read by prayer. Read with great reverence, etc.

DO CATHOLICS READ THE BIBLE?

"Understanding this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private Interpretation"—2 St. Peter i. 20.

INTRODUCTION.

God and the Written Word.—Christ, my brethren, came from Heaven, not only to be Our Redeemer, but also as a Divine Messenger, to announce His Father's will to men. This He Himself tells us, for He says: "The Father Who sent Me, He gave Me commandment what I should say" (St. John xii. 49). Again He says: "The things therefore that I speak, even as the Father said unto Me, so do I speak" (ver. 50). How then did this Divine Messenger make known His Father's will to men? He did so through the conventional signs agreed upon by men and invented by them, to convey the ideas of one to another, namely, by language spoken and written. "God," says St. Paul, "Who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by His Son" (Heb. i. 1-2). But when Our Lord had preached to men, then as the artist paints on canvas what he has conceived in his mind, in order to fix men's eyes upon it; so Christ, that He might

concentrate the world's attention on His Father's will, decreed, that that will should be inscribed upon the imperishable monument of the Written Word. He chose therefore His scribes and servants, and through these men, in various ages, to meet the requirements of the times, He unfolded and chronicled His Father's will. But when Our Lord bequeathed this precious treasure to us, He left it not to the ravages of men and times, but He bequeathed it to His Divinely protected Church, and He thus assigned as the witnesses of its divinity, the expounders of its true meaning, and the guardians of its integrity, the Bishops and pastors of His Church. But as many of the gifts of God have been abused, so have men abused, and made use of the Holy Scriptures, to propagate their falsehoods and their heresies. The Church then has from time to time, made certain rules with regard to the popular use of the Bible, in order to protect this sacred treasure. Some on this account accuse the Church of withholding the Word of God from the faithful; but that this is untrue, the origin and history of the Bible will show. Let us therefore consider this matter briefly (cf. "Popular Use of the Bible").

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE BIBLE.

1. Christ and the Apostles preach.—That the Catholic Church existed hundreds of years before the whole Bible was written, is a fact clear

in history, and it was her first Bishops, the Apostles, who wrote the New Testament. Christ wished the supernatural revelation which He came on earth to preach, to be handed down pure and unsullied, generation after generation. During His public ministry He went about preaching it by word of mouth, now in simple language, now in parables, now in similes, but not one word did He write. He gathered together a number of disciples, and when He had taught them He sent them out into the towns and villages, and frequently He followed them Himself. But before He went up to Heaven, He sent them not merely to the towns and villages of Judea, but He commanded them to go and preach to the whole world. "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (St. Mark xvi. 15). "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20). And in order to make His Church infallible He promised them, and through them their successors, the special assistance of the Holy Spirit. "And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, Whom

the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and will bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you" (St. John xiv. 16-26). Was there any command to write here? No, but on the contrary they were to preach, to deliver the Gospel by word of mouth, and all nations were to learn from their words the faith of Christ. For they had been taught by Christ, and Christ now sends them to preach what they had learnt to others, and He gives us clearly to understand, that they were but His mouthpieces, and that they spoke for Him. "He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me" (St. Luke x. 16). St. Paul also tells us, that the people are to gain a knowledge of Christianity from the lips of the Apostles and their successors, when he says: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. x. 17). All this then proves, that it is from the living voice of the Church, that we are to learn what our holy faith is. The Sacred Scriptures are but a help, an auxiliary, though a most valuable one, in teaching the Catholic Faith.

2. The Apostles write the New Testament.—When Our Lord had ascended to His Eternal Father, and the Paraclete had come down upon the Apostles, they went forth as their Lord had commanded, and preached the Gospel, from Jerusalem to Samaria, to the uttermost bounds of the earth.

The harvest was great, the labourers few, consequently they travelled about much. When there were any troubles or controversies, they held councils and commanded the faithful what traditions to hold, what precepts to observe. When they had founded churches in one place, they went on to another, leaving disciples in charge. Sometimes when they had departed questions arose amongst the faithful, false teachers came in, controversies began, which the new converts to Christianity could not settle themselves, and therefore they had recourse to the Apostles. On this account, and for many other reasons, the Apostles wrote back and sent many letters or Epistles, which were read to the faithful. We have many examples of this in the Epistles of St. Paul. And as they had in their preaching the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, so they had His assistance in writing. He prompted them to write, He suggested to them what truths they were to write about; and He preserved them from all error in what they wrote. St. Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, at the request of the Christians in Judea. St. Mark the disciple of St. Peter, wrote his for the Christians at Rome; St. Luke the companion of St. Paul wrote when the Greeks requested; and the beloved disciple St. John, wrote his Gospel, that all might read it and confound the Ebionites, who denied Our Lord's Divinity. In the "Acts of the Apostles," St. Luke

gives a brief account of the Church for about thirty years. St. Paul wrote his Epistles, now to correct abuses, now to settle some point in doctrine, now to comfort, now to urge some church he had founded to greater fervour. But whether it was Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, or Paul who wrote they were Catholics, and what they wrote about was the Catholic Faith, and surely they thoroughly understood what they were writing. Thus, when the Catholic religion had been preached in many countries by the Apostles and their disciples, its doctrines, laws, and practices, were in great part written in the books of that part of the Bible, which we call the New Testament. God then was the principal Author of these books, since the Holy Ghost prompted the human authors to write, and guarded them from error in what they wrote.

3. The Catholic Church gives the Bible to the world.—Thus in time there were many manuscripts, many Epistles, for the successors of the Apostles, as St. Ignatius, Polycarp, Clement, and others wrote likewise. But the Church guided by the Holy Spirit, sought out with care, diligence, and zeal, those which came from the hands of the sacred writers, those inspired by the Holy Ghost; and putting them with that version of the Old Testament, which was used by Our Lord, the Apostles, and the infant Church, in the year 397, at the Council of Carthage, she gave them to the world

in the form which we now call the "Bible." Where was Protestantism then? Why twelve centuries must almost pass before the world would even hear of it. How then during this time, much less at present, were men indebted to it for the Sacred Scriptures? How could its members, when it did arise, tell, that Moses or Peter, or Luke or John ever wrote a line? And even if they had known this, how could they decide which books were authentic, and which were not? The manuscripts were lost, the style of writing almost unknown, the language and manners of the people changed. The Bible then was given to the world by the Catholic Church. Her inspired Pastors wrote it, it was her property, and contained many of her laws, doctrines and practices; and surely if she wrote it and was guided by the Holy Ghost in doing so, she knows what it means, and is also guided by the Holy Ghost in interpreting it.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S CARE OF THE BIBLE.

4. Her care to prevent errors.—But the Church did not stop here, she was most anxious that no errors should creep into the text. God had not promised, that mistakes in copying and translating would not arise, He had worked no miracle to hinder this. No one can fail to see how easily the most conscientious scribe can made a mistake, a word missed out, a word wrongly spelt, a wrong

word substituted, and the sense, the truth, of some doctrine may be changed. We find a distinct example of this in St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians (xi. 27), where he is speaking of the Holy Eucharist. "Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body, and of the blood of the Lord." Here we find erroneous translators putting the word "and" in the place of "or," in Bibles which are not Catholic, and this corruption or error founds for some a reason for arguing, that the faithful must receive Holy Communion under both kinds. The Catholic Church then guided by God, has ever been most careful to prevent such mistakes from creeping in. Pope Damasus early in the Church's history, called upon the great St. Jerome, a most holy and most learned man, a man, who thoroughly understood Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He went carefully through the Inspired Book, corrected any mistakes and A.D. 405, the church gave to the world the Latin Bible, which is commonly called the "Vulgate," from the fact that it was the one commonly used and authorised by the Church. It stands therefore before the world as the true claimant for integrity, genuineness, authenticity and inspiration; in a word, as the possessor of every attribute necessary to constitute, a Divinely inspired Volume. Again and again, as time went on the Catholic Church called upon the

most learned men of the age, to find and correct any mistakes that had crept in since St. Jerome's time. Alcuin, Lanfranc, St. Peter Damian, Nicholas the Deacon and many others, were employed at different periods in this most important work.

5. The Catholic Church preserved the Bible.—And now we ask who preserved the Bible for us? It was the priests or the monks of the Catholic Church. In every monastery there was the "Scriptorum," or writing room, in which the monks prayed and laboured. Here they translated and transcribed copies of the Bible, and these copies were not indeed few. Printing was not discovered till many centuries later, and it was not surprising that Bibles were not so numerous as they are now. It was not common then, to turn out so many thousands of copies as is done in a short time in our day; it was a long heavy task to write one, and as the material on which they were written was very dear, there were few who could purchase a whole copy of the Bible.

Yet still the poor in a certain way had the Sacred Scriptures. In many Churches a copy was kept for the use of the faithful, and in the monasteries where the poor were taught in crowds, the Bible was shown to and explained to them; and countless were the manuscripts called the "Poor Man's Bible," in which the most necessary parts of the Sacred Scriptures were written and given to the

poor. And beyond this, portions of it were read in Divine Service and explained to them.

DID THE CATHOLIC CHURCH KEEP THE WORD OF GOD FROM THE PEOPLE?

6. The Church's wish to make the Bible known.—There is an old error, a falsehood to which many give credence, even in our enlightened age. They will tell you that the Catholic Church kept the Word of God from the faithful and prohibited them from reading it. This is untrue as facts prove. The art of printing was discovered about A.D. 1441, and the Popes made use of it for spreading a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Pope Sixtus again had the Bible throughly examined and corrected, and Pope Clement, not only had it examined, but set up a printing press in his palace, and there had the Bible printed all possible care being taken, to avoid typical errors and mistakes. Now why were there Popes so eager to scatter the Bible abroad, after they had it examined, that they even set up printing presses to multiply it? The answer is, that, instead of keeping it from the people, the Church and its Pastors did all they could, to give it to those who would read it with attention and devotion, and for this reason they kept it pure and unsullied, and handed it to the children of the Church.

7. Early written editions of the Bible.—But

long before the art of printing was invented several nations had written copies of the Bible in the vulgar tongue. Nor must we forget that for almost nine centuries the Latin language was almost universal, and known by most people almost as well as their mother tongue. Yet St. Jerome translated the Bible into Latin, it is called the Vulgate and was finished A.D. 405. So we see here an edition of the Sacred Scriptures in a language almost as well known as the mother tongue by every nation, and it may therefore be called a universal language, and an edition of the Bible in it was almost equivalent to one in the vulgar tongue. History shows that the Bible was translated into English in the eighth, tenth, eleventh and thirteenth centuries. Bishop Horne, one of the greatest Protestant authorities says: "There is no reason to suspect the Church of Rome, of any intention to deprive the laity of the Scriptures." He declares also that Louis Debonnaire caused the Bible to be translated into German in the eighth century, and that it was translated into French in the ninth. And if every man did not possess a Bible then, it was on account of the price, which was great, and there was reason for this when we consider the labour of writing and the price of the material written upon.

8. Early printed editions of the Bible.—Luther is said to have opened the Word of God to the people and to have scattered it broadcast. But

in reality the people had the Word of God before his time. The Church had given Germany the Bible in the Vulgar tongue A.D. 1462, and there were thirteen editions before Luther's, and nine before he was born. Italy had the Bible in her own tongue A.D. 1471, and fourteen other editions followed. France, Spain, Poland, Bohemia, and other nations. had versions in the vulgar tongue almost about this time. The statement of these facts is sufficient to show, that it is untrue to state that the Catholic Church ever kept the Bible from her children.

9. The Church prohibits the reading of erroneous translations.—But this charge is based upon a false foundation. What the Church really did was this. She did forbid the reading of erroneous and false translations without note or comment. When the reformers appeared, they issued edition after edition of the Bible full of errors and without notes. The Church forbade the reading of these, and we must surely see that these false translations were not the Bible; and in forbidding her children to read them she did not forbid the reading of the Bible, because they were not the Bible. We find that those who are not Catholics have done the very same. When Lancaster a Quaker opened his school for the poor in Southwark A.D. 1786, he had the Bible read in the school without gloss or comment, and what was the result? At once the pulpit and press fumed

against him, and cried out against such an act. He was, "another Julian the Apostate," and his action in this matter could only tend to form, "the people into one great deistical compound." (See Skeat's Hist. Free Churches). Now why rage against the Catholic Church when she does what the non-Catholics of England did? They bitterly reproached Lancaster, for having the Bible read without note or comment, and yet they revile the Church when she forbids her children to follow his example. How inconsistent to blame the Catholic Church for acting precisely as they acted themselves! And surely the Church is a most prudent Mother in this respect; for, St. Peter tells us, that private interpretation is the cause of many terrible evils. "Understanding this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation" (2 St. Peter I. 20). The Apostle then tells us why this is so. Referring to the writings of St. Paul he says: "In which are certain things hard to be understood which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do the other Scriptures to their own destruction" (2 St. Peter III. 16). That the Apostle's words are true experience teaches: for, the principle of private interpretation, has led, not only to indifferentism in religion, but also to rationalism, and a denial of religion altogether. No impartial man, can therefore, blame the Catholic Church for her prudence in this matter.

Conclusion.—To the Church then brethren, we owe the Sacred Scriptures, and through her zeal and care we have them pure and unsullied. They show plainly themselves, that they are not to be expounded by any man's private judgment or spirit, because every part of them was written by sacred writers under the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and declared as such by the Church. They are therefore to be interpreted under the guidance of the same Holy Spirit, Who resides in the Church and speaks through her pastors. The Catholic Church has never closed the Bible to her people, she freely permits them to read the Bible which she has sanctioned, and Pope after Pope, prelate after prelate have urged the children of the Church to frequently read the Sacred Scriptures. She wishes us to do so, that we may be able to give an account of the faith that is in us, that we may be able to defend religion against infidelity. If the Bible be Catholic with explanatory notes, everything has been done which the Church prescribes, and every person so far as the Church is concerned, is at liberty to read vernacular translations thus made. When you read the Holy Bible brethren, prepare your souls by prayer, read with great reverence remember that it is the Inspired Word of God, which so many saints read on bended knee. Be careful never to use the the sacred words contained in the Scriptures, in your jests, nor to use them in a vulgar way. And if you

hear men attacking our Mother the Church with regard to these matters we have dwelt upon, show them your Bible, point out to them the book shop where Catholic Bibles are openly and freely sold; and when they boast of private interpretation and the like, answer them in St. Peter's words. "Understanding this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation."

THE MODERN WOMAN.

SYNOPSIS.

The Modern Woman.

"*Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.*"—Proverbs xxxi. 30.

Introduction . . The work of women.

Mistaken Notions of the Modern Young Woman
1. The modern young woman's revolt.
2. How few young women truly serve God.
3. Modern young women's false notions of life.

How Modern Young Women gain these False Notions
4. They are deluded by novel reading.
5. They are deceived by going to theatres.
6. They live in an imaginary world.

The Modern Young Women Mistakes about Marriage
7. Their false views of marriage.
8. The dangers of company keeping.
9. Their false ideas of a wife's position.

Conclusion . . . The importance of the matter; Parents' duties.

THE MODERN WOMAN.

"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."—Proverbs xxxi. 30.

INTRODUCTION.

The work of woman.—The most learned men, my brethren, of the day, tell us that the sun's light and warmth, are the forces that sustain all vegetable and animal life, that exists on the surface of our globe. They regulate the seasons, the growth of the tree and the shrub, of the flower and the grass, and all that makes this earth of ours so beautiful and an image of paradise. They give health to the myriads of animals that live in the air, in the waters, and on land; they give motion to the rain in falling, to the rivers in their courses, and the many hued clouds that sail overhead. Nay, there is not a single beauty, which the little flowers possess that is not enhanced, by the light and heat of that glorious orb, which our Eternal Father has suspended in the heavens.

"Even so woman, within that world which is your home and kingdom, your work in life is to brighten, to lighten up and beautify all things around you. Your virtuous example is to be the source of vital fire and strength, without which the father will be

no true father, the son no true son, and the child not what it ought to be. All come from you, and learn from you, how to labour lovingly and patiently, how to forget self and be mindful of others, and how to acccomplish that great and only end for which the Almighty made them."

MISTAKEN NOTIONS OF MODERN YOUNG WOMEN.

1. The modern young woman's revolt.—But just as the thick and heavy clouds interpose themselves between the sun and earth, and hinder it from doing its work, just as the countless parasites seize upon the flower, and creeping down into its very bosom before it is fully formed destroy it; so alas, the examples and allurements of this sinful world, crowd into the heart of the young girl before she has ripened into womanhood, and giving her a false idea of life and its duties, make her unfitted, for the great work for which she is destined by God. Here is the source of a multitude of evils which afflict this world, here is the cause why the young woman of the day has revolted against the code of morals, and the rules of prudence, which produced in the past, mothers, wives and sisters, whom sincere and honest men almost worshipped and idolised. They who would fully understand the great dignity and mission of the Christian woman, must earnestly study the great purpose for which her Maker made her. The young girl of

to-day is taught by the world that she must live but for pleasure, that she is a being who is not to be ruled, but was born to rule all others. By its adulation and flattery it feeds her pride, makes her despise other mortals, and think that all are but her slaves. Work is hard, when she with her high notions thinks she should be kept in ease and luxury. The whirl, the excitement, and giddy pleasures of the world turn her head, and she refuses to yield to that course of training which prescribes purity, humility, mortification and labour. Little does she know about prayer, meditation, charity, truthfulness, prudence, or the other virtues and pious practices, which would fit her for her future life. No, the training of the modern young woman is absolutely wrong and is most dangerous, and parents will have to give a most serious account to God, for the latitude they allow their young daughters. They will be punished, for not having formed the character of these children much earlier than they do, and for not having kept them in greater restraint. The evils in this matter may be fitly attributed to the laxity of parents. Yet these children are God's as well as theirs, what answer then will they give to Him at the moment of Judgment?

2. How few young women truely fear God.—"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

Yet how few of our young women really fear the Lord? How very few show this fear by a practical and holy life? What indeed is their life, what notions have they about life and its duties, how are they preparing for the work which God wishes them to do for Him on earth? We are afraid that if we asked some of these young women at the week end what they had done for God, their words would be few. How often and how carefully had they said their morning and evening prayers, how often they had been to Holy Mass when they had an opportunity, how often they go to evening service, how much work they had done at home to relieve their mother, and what good actions they had performed for their neighbours? If we asked them these questions their replies would be very brief. But if we were to ask, how many novels they had read, how many times they had been to parties, balls and theatres, what time they had spent there, and who and what they had seen; ah, then they could talk volumes. And why is this? It is because the craze for amusement, frivolity and pleasure, which has spread with such amazing rapidity amongst young girls in the upper circles of society, has with a downward tendency, seized hold also of the young in the middle and lower classes, and is thus destroying, the simple and honest minds of the poor, and acting like a virulent poison on the hearts of women of the

younger generation. There is in all, but especially in the lower classes, far too much "young ladyism," and we see traces of this poison in theatres, which are crammed with young people who are breathlessly watching the production of most questionable pieces. We see it in the papers which are often full of the latest sensations, and records of the most loathsome crimes. We find it in the latest novels, novels written with a purpose by designing authors, novels which arrive at the most erratic conclusions, without once disclosing the false logic which led to them. Thus the revolt of the daughters in the upper circles is fastening itself upon those of the lower circle of society; and is a revolt against honour, truth, work, right, purity, and all that formerly made woman so noble, grand and precious, in the sight of man. The grand sturdy woman of the past, who was fond of retirement, shy, modest, God-fearing; a woman of prayer, charity and mortification, is quickly disappearing, and the frivolous, froward toy is taking her place. She, who used to be man's helpmate and his friend, now only lives to be amused and petted like a spoilt child.

3. Modern young women's false notions of life.—The great danger of our day, is the taking of young girls from the position in which their Maker placed them, and giving them erroneous ideas, about their mission in the world and the way to fulfil it. Deceived by lying novelists, and the adulation and

flattery of designing men, they are quickly led astray, their mind is filled with, and their will ruled by false principles, which work sad havoc in their lives, and in the lives of those amongst whom the lot of such women is cast. The peace and happiness of families, the welfare of society, the reign of morality, but above all the salvation of many souls is in their hands, and there will come a time when they must give a strict account of their power in these matters, and state what good or evil they have produced. To-day we hear a great deal of woman's rights, and woman's wrongs. Woman according to many, is the "problem of the hour." "What is to be done with her."? Women think that they are harshly treated. "Why should she not go out into the market place and compete with man"? "Why should she not compete with man in every way possible"? "The selfishness of man is woman's woe." We believe not. This may be the teaching of the world, but it is not that of God. The truest and noblest philanthropy in this matter, is to build up the self-continence, and personal worth of woman, and everything which does this is worthy of encouragement; that which tends to break down her character, is worthy only of contempt. That woman has an entirely wrong idea of life, who believes that she was created, only to enjoy the gaities of the world, that man was made to be her humble slave, that pain and labour are

things not to be endured. The true worth of a woman depends upon her love of, her reverence for, and the maintainence of her love and devotion to the sanctities of home life. A woman's place, whether with or without work is in her home, she is essentially domestic ; and there her labours should make others happy, her example make others good, her words and actions should lead those of her household, to love and serve God faithfully. This is where her Maker placed her, and here her great mission should be carried out; He did not create her to be man's superior, but his friend and companion. There is nothing degrading in such a mission, for there can be nothing lowering in doing what God wishes us to do. Yet how few, how very few, of our modern young women have such an idea of life as this. Home, and its duties are distasteful to them. They prefer the gay noisy life of the world.

HOW MODERN YOUNG WOMEN GAIN THESE FALSE NOTIONS.

4. They are deluded by novel reading.—And now we pause to ask, what has led the modern young girl to revolt, how has her mind been filled with these false ideas of life. The answer to the questions, may be a remedy for the evil. Novel reading takes up a great deal of many young girls' lives. And did she but derive from this source as she must do, a false view of men and things, this

in itself would be a danger of no little moment, for the intellect holds a high place among the faculties of man. The intellect suggests motives for acting and gives life its direction. What then if the intellect be darkened, if the will be also made blind, through being governed by a blind understanding? Must not both fall into the ditch! What is the subject matter of these novels, what light do they throw upon life? They are but false pictures, fictitious paintings full of deceit, they portray an ideal existence, the very opposite to the dry monotonous daily round of duties, that make up the real life of most of us. They often also may be termed not only unreal and dangerous, but downright bad reading, because they are to a certain extent immoral, deal in wanton jests, and speak slightingly and disparagingly of sacred things. Virtue is sometimes represented in a guise that makes it unattractive and ridiculous, vice appears in a beautiful form so highly painted, that it seems at most, some good quality pushed to extremes. The holiest institutions, the most sacred duties of men and women, and affairs of families are treated with deplorable levity. The hero is often a man stained with numerous crimes, and the heroine, in spite of advice and counsel, in spite of her duties to God, clings to him, defends him, and often unites her life to his. Yet it is from these unreal, dangerous, and fictitious books, that many girls of the day

drink in their notions of life. Again and again, we have known young women to have taken their rules of conduct not the from Gospel, but from these dangerous books; again and again, have we found young women taking the principles with which to mould their lives from the heroine in the novel. Need we say that they thus gain and act upon, an empty, false, and unreal notion of life and its duties.

5. They are deceived by going to theatres.—And what do such girls find at the theatre? An artificial world which fills her with disgust for the real one in which she has to live. She sees an ideal state of things which gives a melancholy aspect to the realities around her; exaggerated passions which give and create a sort of contempt for the calmer feelings, and more delightful emotions which constitute the charm of a family, and the happiness of life. How insignificant must the rational love of a true Christian man appear, after the exaggerated outbursts of passionate feeling in the play or drama. If the young impressionable girl who frequents theatres be not on her guard, her life will be, so to speak, divided. The one part ideal, poetical, full of pleasing sentiments and emotions; the other dull, real, burdened with duties. In time the young girl will love the former and hate the latter, and existence will then be a misery. The theatre gives her nothing but a false impression of life and, renders her totally unfit for her duties in after life.

Compelled to live a real life, her heart takes refuge in the ideal one, and she suffers from the slightest inconvenience. She has no energy for, no relish for domestic life, she seems a creature out of place, and after a time, deluded of her fondest hopes, she pines away, often allowing criminal pleasures to take the place, of what she thinks she has lost.

6. They live in an imaginary world.—Such a girl lives more in an imaginary world than in a real intellectual one, she lets her imagination guide her, instead of her intellect and will. How easily can we notice such a woman. She is rash in her judgments, whimsical in her tastes, inconstant in her affections, most foolish in her speeches, vain and giddy in her general conduct. Serious truth has lost its power over her, and she is fond of those who flatter her, but detests those who are sober and earnest. We need go no further then to show where the modern young woman gets her false notions from since we see her on the very threshold of life, buried as it were in an unreal, fictitious, and evil world, through evil reading, and frequenting theatres. The lives of the women who do these things speak for themselves, we need say no more.

THE MODERN YOUNG WOMAN'S MISTAKE ABOUT MARRIAGE.

7. Their false Views of Marriage.—How does all this prepare these young girls, for that great moment in most women's lives, the moment of

marriage? Alas just as their false notions in general render them unfit to battle with life's problems, so here especially these false ideas cause the greatest trouble. As there is no state so close and intimate, as that which exists between husband and wife, so there is no state in which there are so many occasions of strife, of disappointments, of regrets. Even in marriages over which prudence and religion presided, and in which the two had before acquired a knowledge, that their tempers and dispositions were suited to each other and harmonised together, there may still arise many unforeseen causes of uneasiness. To be united to a man of religion and probity, whom she is authorised to look upon as a sincere friend, into whose bosom she will at all times, have the liberty to deposit her sorrows, secrets, and joys; and who will be ever her attentive guardian in sickness and in health, who will bring to her not only the necessaries but also the comforts of life; to be united to such a man is surely an inviting prospect for any woman. But if she looks at marriage from this point of view only, and does not consider that it is a union of two weak, frail beings, full of defects and miseries, and that it requires a daily exercise of unwearied patience and forbearance, she will soon be disappointed. Before marriage both of them have seen each other at a distance and at their best. They were interested and were careful to show them-

selves, in a way that would inspire esteem and love, and to hide what they feared might be any obstacle to their union. But when the bond of marriage, which cannot be broken, has united them, then there is no farther reason for disguise, they see each other daily and hourly, in their natural tempers and inclinations, and now appear without deceit and such as they really are. The woman, the weaker of the two, and who depends on her husband may have most to suffer, and meekness, condescension, patience and forgiveness of wrongs are often her lot. This of course should not be, since forbearance on both sides would obviate it, but we have here to deal with actual facts. Now the modern young woman, neither allows prudence, nor religion to direct her in choice of a husband, for she is not religious as a rule, but a giddy worldling, and prudence is a virtue almost unknown to her. When she is about eighteen years of age or little more, she dresses finely, goes out at nights to parade herself and her enhanced beauty, she thinks she must improve her position by a marriage with someone better than herself. She is not troubled much about religion, nay he may be of another religion she cares not. All she seems to ask for, is a man who will give her plenty of dress, keep her in comfort, amuse her and entertain her. If she thinks of the future, she consoles herself with the thought that the man she has chosen will be always the

same to her. But lo, in a few weeks after marriage what a great change takes place. Her husband now begins to see her defects, he is wearied by her peevish temper, disgusted by her inability to manage the home, her dislike of work, and her sharp tongue. Thus the married life of the modern young woman, becomes in time a burden, a curse to her. She never thought of all this before marriage, she had no thought of Heaven or hell, her only object in marriage, was ease, luxury and amusement.

8. The dangers of company keeping.—If we take a glance into many of our streets late at night, we often find them full of overdressed girls walking with their companions. The darker the road or the street, the more there are. What is the result? Ruined characters and unhappy marriages. How could it be otherwise? What does any Catholic young girl want outside of her father's house at late hours? "Ah," they say, "you must not be cruel, you must not think a young girl is a slave, you have no right to ask her to come home till she likes These are the days of woman's freedom and she can do as she likes." Perhaps, the woman who lives in an unreal world, the woman of the novel and the theatre may think so, but what will this so called liberty bring her? Go into our large towns, and ask those poor fallen creatures sunk in vice what brought them to this, and many of them will answer: "Company keeping and late hours."

But again these young women answer, that they must know the man of their choice, and to do this they must go out with him, they cannot marry him without knowing his disposition. Certainly they should not. They may and ought to see each other, and converse together, but it should be always in the presence of another prudent person. But if they are fully determined to go out, then in the name of goodness, let it be in a public place, and at reasonable hours. There can never be any good reason found for lonely roads, and unreasonable hours, for these two facts point in themselves to grave dangers, if not to actual evil. Secrecy here is never desired for any good motive, but rather the opposite. And though it is said sometimes, that the faults of either party can only be discovered by these secret meetings, it is utterly false; for during such interviews both hide their faults, and give a false impression to each other, especially to the young, romantic, modern girl.

9. Their false ideas of a wife's position.—It is said that in marriage woman has most to lose, and that she will cling to her husband whilst life is tolerable. But observation of the past does not confirm this statement. Just as thoughtlessly as the young woman to-day enters into marriage, so does she as thoughtlessly allow a trifle to interrupt the harmony of wedded life. There can be no question about the fact, that it is a great trial to imperfect

human nature, to bring two private individuals together, and unite them and make them two in one flesh. The season called "courtship," such as it is now, far from preparing them for the life they will have to lead, just educates them in the opposite direction. The young woman in our day, has to be coaxed, amused, petted and won, and the young man has to lay himself and all he has at her feet. Her will is his law, her tastes his guide; her requests however unreasonable are to him royal commands. He lives to please her, comes and goes at her word, and is in fact her slave. She expects this to go on for ever, she feels that her commands will always be obeyed, in fact, marriage is for her a sort of coronation, as though she were a queen. This is precisely what their private meetings seemed to prove to her. But on the other hand the man has no intention of being her slave for ever, he looks forward to the date of marriage as the day of his emancipation. Soon then, when they are married, he seeks to take his true position as head of the house. He now rules instead of being ruled. He will consult with her, advise her, and in many matters gives way, but he expects to be obeyed, he is determined to govern. The dethroned queen is disconsolate. She cannot bear her disappointment quietly, she cannot lay aside her sceptre gracefully. Sometimes she is sullen, at other times she is sharp, and cutting, and irritating in her retorts. There are continual

quarrels, the husband tries to reason with her but she listens not. She tells him he is changed, he is a different man now, she cannot bear him; sometimes she will even hint that she hates him. She charges him with being cruel, with deceiving her. No, she has deceived herself. Novel reading, theatres, parties, dances, secret meetings and the like have given her altogether a false idea of life and its duties, and made her unfit for the duties belonging to her position. She must blame herself, not her husband.

Conclusion.—Brethren, the training and education of young girls in our day, is a matter of the utmost importance. No words of ours can describe the zeal, the earnestness, and the care, with which parents should train their young daughters. The laxity of parents in this matter is truly deplorable, and fearful will be the account they will have to render to God for this. Let them look to it now at least. Begin quite early with young girls and keep them out of danger. Watch the novel, stop parties, theatre-going, dances and such like. Have no late hours, no secret company keeping, if your daughters feel called to the married state, let them see the men they choose in your own house, or under your supervision. In the place of amusements, substitute something innocent yet enjoyable. Above and before all, see that your girls attend to their religious duties continually for, only "the woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised."

THE MODERN PHARISEES.

SYNOPSIS.

The Modern Pharisees.

"*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*"—St. John viii. 7.

Introduction . .	The character of the Pharisees.
The Conduct of the Modern Pharisees	1. They watch their neighbours. 2. They make their neighbours' faults public. 3. Their motives are bad.
The Condemnation of the Modern Pharisees	4. Their condemnation by men. 5. Their condemnation by God.
Conclusion . .	Am I a Pharisee? I must change this.

THE MODERN PHARISEES.

"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."—St. John viii. 7

INTRODUCTION.

The character of the Pharisees.—The Pharisees, my brethren, as the Gospel reveals them to us, were a sect of the Jewish people, whose hearts were full of pride, and who by an outward show of their so-called holiness, endeavoured to win the esteem and praise of men. And in order to do this more securely, they were ever busy, meddling with other peoples affairs, ever watching, injuring and maligning others in every way they could; for their proud hearts could not endure the thought of others being respected, and consequently they destroyed their neighbour's character, in every way possible. So detestable was their mode of acting, so wretched their character that our meek and loving Lord condemned their conduct in strong and most emphatic language. "Woe," He said, "to you Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites; because you are like to whitened Sepulchres, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all filthiness. You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment

of hell?" (St. Matt. xxiii. 27, 33). Terrible indeed are these words of Christ which call for our most earnest consideration; for in our days there are many men and women, who act now, as the Pharisees did of old, and thus earn for themselves the terrible condemnation of Our Lord, Who warns them, that, it will be most difficult for them to escape the terrors of judgment and save their souls. Who the modern Pharisees are, what their wretched conduct is, we shall learn by comparing them with those who existed in the time of Christ.

THE CONDUCT OF THE MODERN PHARISEES.

1. They watch their neighbours.—St. John tells us that upon one occasion, the Pharisees find a woman who had committed a serious sin, and they take her and bring her before Our Lord, not indeed because they were sorry for her crime, but in order to entrap Christ in His speech (St. John viii. 6). Now either the Pharisees themselves, or some one employed by them, had been watching this poor weak woman; for it is yet early in the morning when they seize her, even in the very act of sin (verse 4), and bring her forth for condemnation without a thought of pity or mercy. Now the world, and those who follow its example, are ever busy watching their neighbours' affairs. So continually do they do this, that, one would think they had no other business on this earth, no other reason

for existence. Whether their neighbours are out in the street, or in their own homes, the eyes of these Modern Pharisees are always upon them, their thoughts and words are concerning them. The life and conduct of their fellow man is their one theme, their one subject; and being evil themselves to a great extent, they believe him to be the same, and hence they are ever watching for the least flaw, the least fault in his character. If they discover even the smallest fault in their neighbour's life, they rashly think over it, they sit in judgment upon it, they construe and magnifiy it, until they make out a mere trifle, to be some hideous and awful crime. How many Catholics act thus? Indeed they are numerous, and they seem to know their neighbour's affairs, better than he knows them himself. They even enter his home with their eyes and ears open, to see and hear all they can; under the guise of friendship they enter, yet in their hearts they know that they seek evil; and how often is it, that not knowing every circumstance, that not knowing precisely all, they condemn as a crime, that which is in reality indifferent or even good. Being evil, secret, and malicious themselves, they think every one else is the same, and hence they judge every one by their own standard.

2. They make their neighbour's faults public.—The Pharisees bring the woman before Christ, not when He is alone but when He is

teaching in the temple with the people around Him (verse 2). Surely if they merely wished to hear what Christ had to say about the woman's sin, they might have taken her to Him privately, and thus have spared her the terrible pain and humiliation of a public exposure. But no, they drag her on, they seem to think they have every right to make her sin known to the world; and so do their imitators in our day, make known to others every fault they find in their fellow man. They seem to think that when their fellow-man in his weakness commits a sin, that they have every right to make his sin public. Sometimes they reveal it by one method, sometimes by another. Two women visit each other and what is the subject of their conversation? The faults of the neighbour next door. Of course the woman of the house asks her visitor to keep it secret, but she knows that the more she asks, the more will it be spread, and spread it is quickly and widely. Three or four people meet in the street, and again the topic of their conversation is the conduct of their neighbour. How terrible a sin is this evil habit. We have indeed no right to reveal our neighbour's faults, for such a right would lead to terrible crimes and to the greatest possible confusion. Our own reason will convince us of this, for, how would we feel, if everyone had the right to reveal every fault they find in us? And the law of God, except in the most serious cases,

when the public safety is at stake, or when the revelation of another's fault to a superior will lead to the sinner's conversion, actually forbids us to reveal, what we have secretly learnt about our neighbour. We have no right then to make known his sins, and charity demands that we should rather hide them. But say some: "It is true and others talk about it. They say."—Yes when worldly people are busy about others, they say a great deal. They do not speak in a whisper, but in loud brazen tones, eager to gain as large an audience as they possibly can. They of course are infallible, they never doubt about anything they say, nor are they likely to do so. They say many spiteful things, many unkind things, many bitter and unpleasant things; and they never say a good word where there is a chance of saying a bad one. Test their sayings about yourself, and you will soon find out, what disregard they have for truth, charity, or religion. And if they deal thus with you, can you trust or believe them, when they speak harshly of others? And you will notice, that these people are not very intellectual nor clever, they are mostly common and evil. Are we then to follow their example, to mix up with such a worldly crowd? Surely, if they sin grievously in the sight of God when they act thus, that is no reason why we should imitate them. On the contrary, we ought to hate and detest such conduct, as we indeed do, when they are busy talking about ourselves.

How strange it is that persons cannot meet in the street, or visit each other in their homes, without talking about, reviling, injuring, and tearing to pieces, the characters of those who live about them. It is common knowledge, that Catholics as well as others do so, and often especially the so-called pious Catholic. This is shown clearly when these conspirators or tatlers quarrel. Then what strife, what din, and clatter there is, giving pain and scandal in every way. Truly such work is the work of the devil, and they who do it are his agents. God commands us to love one another, but this tatling banishes charity from many hearts, and fills them with bitter thoughts, hatred, and revenge.

3. Their motives are bad.—To be sure, when the Pharisees drag this poor woman before Christ and the people, they were sorry that she had sinned and thus offended God? No, indeed they were not, and the clearest proof of this is, that they were sinners themselves. Their motive, as St. John tells us was to catch Our Lord in His words, "that they might accuse Him" (verse 6). "Moses in the law commanded us to stone such a one. But what sayest Thou?" If Christ told them to act as Moses had commanded, then they would call Him cruel, if He said she should not be stoned, then according to them, He would have broken the law of Moses. When we and others, accuse men and women of sins and crimes, have we any good motive, and if

so what is it? No, our motives are bad and wicked. We wish to point out that others are sinners, we magnifiy their little faults into great crimes, which we paint in most hideous colours, because we do not like them, and wish other people to dislike them. We wish others to hate them, to treat them cruelly, and so we satisfy our spite towards them. Or perhaps, they are looked up to and esteemed good, and our pride is hurt because they are thought better than us; and so we reveal all the evil we know of them, and often multiply their faults, to lower them in men's estimation. Our wicked motives then rest on pride, selfishness, and malice, and the thought that God has been offended is nothing to us. What more common, than to hear men and women crying down the sinner, and yet they think nothing of committing many grave sins themselves? How inconsistent, how wretched, such conduct, what are they doing but condemning themselves? Is there one law for them, and another for their neighbour? Certainly not, and too late will they recognise this at the Day of Judgment.

THE CONDEMNATION OF THE MODERN PHARISEES.

4. Their condemnation by men.—When the Pharisees continue to demand an answer from Christ, He raises Himself up, and looking at them

says: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." This was not the answer they expected. What consternation must have filled their hearts at this moment! Their whole life, their whole conduct, was but one great external exhibition of their reputed holiness; but now, they stand before their God Who knows every corner of their wicked hearts; and by His words tells them that He knows they are sinners. "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Here is a distinct challenge to them if they were free from sin, but their consciences tell them, that they are sinners also like the poor woman, greater perhaps, and why should she be stoned and they allowed to live? When then they heard the words of Christ, they steal away in shame and confusion. How must the good men and woman who surrounded Christ; have despised and detested such wretched conduct; and how could these wicked men ever again pretend to be holy? When we Catholics acting in a similar manner, reveal the faults of our neighbour, do we think that good people will admire us for it, or that even our partners who do the same will esteem us? No, but good men and women despise such actions, and those even who talk with us, know we have many faults and are slow in telling this to others. How often do we hear such words as these: "Mrs. So-and-So told me that her neighbour is very bad,

but she need not talk, she herself is a great deal worse." This evil practice then condemns us not only in the eyes of the good, but even in those of the wicked. Truly a grand reward for offending God!

5. Their condemnation by God.—But, a far more terrible condemnation, awaits the modern Pharisee at the end of life. Though the crowd saw the Pharisees steal away because they were sinners, yet a more terrible ordeal awaited them, namely, the condemnation of Christ. "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees; because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but within you are full of rapine and uncleanness. You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell?" (St. Matt. xxiii. 25, 33). Terrible indeed were the woes which Christ hurled against them. And surely their sins must have been most serious, to call for such strong and striking denunciations, from Our meek and gentle Lord. But if Christ spoke thus to the Pharisees in life, what will He say to the modern Pharisee who dies in his sins? How then will they avoid the judgment of hell? Ah, the terrible sentence that He will then pass upon them, will hurl them into hell, where they will have to suffer the most awful tortures for all eternity, as long as God is God. The condemnation of men is bad enough, but nothing compared to that of God.

Conclusion.—Brethren, many more faults in the character of the Pharisees might be pointed out, but enough has been said to show you what they are, and to enable you to know if you are one. Are you one of these people, who go into your neighbour's house in order to carry stories out? Are you very frequently accustomed to stand at street corners, and talk with others about the faults of your fellow creatures? Perhaps you take a delight in hearing others blamed, in hearing their secret sins made known. You no doubt think yourself holy, or at least give men that impression by your words and actions; but your conscience tells you, that you are worse and far more sinful, than those whom you expose and help to condemn. "You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell? (Verse 33). It will then be impossible to escape hell unless you change your lives now, and reject for ever, the principles and actions of the Modern Pharisees which have been set before you. Try your best to love all men, to speak well of all, expose the faults of no one, but rather try to shield them, and should you hear others doing so, think of your own sins and crimes, and think of Christ's words: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

FATHERS' LIBRARY
SD

THE ANCHOR PRESS LTD.
156 MINORIES, LONDON.

CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL UNION
BX1756.H65 C001
PRACTICAL PREACHING FOR PRIESTS AND PEOP
3 0311 00043 7629

WITHDRAWN

16,679

WHEN taking out this book, please write name and date on card and place card in CARD-DROP.

PLEASE see that this book is returned ON TIME: others may be waiting for it.

KINDLY refrain from defacing this book in any way, and also from leaving MARKERS of any kind between the pages.

[redacted]
[redacted] 7629